Chapter 1
CHILDREN'S STORIES – PART 5

A LESSON WAS LEARNT

Chanumia was strolling around with his pocket full of the money which he received as *Eidie*, when he noticed a small crowd of people gathered around a stranger. He curiously came closer and what did he see? The stranger had wads of money stacked up beside him. The children were giving him five and ten rupees in exchange for wads of notes. Chanumia was overcome with greed and saw this as a very lucrative and profitable prospect. He took out the money from his pocket and counted it. He had 53 rupees in total. He handed the full amount to the stranger who gave him a shopping bag full of notes in exchange. He was very excited and pleased with himself. He thought to himself that he will go home and tell his father to come and buy out all the notes from the stranger.

As soon as he entered the house, he looked at the money he had acquired. There were denominations of 1000, 500, 100, 10 and 5 rupee notes. Chanumia took out his notebook and started counting his 'fortune'. He had a total of 220 710 rupees. He proudly and contently came to his mother and told her that he had earned 220 710 rupees in lieu of 53 rupees.
"Huh! What are you saying? Have you perhaps lost your mind?" she retorted.
"Yes, mother! I am speaking the truth, I have acquired 220 710 rupees in exchange for 53 rupees."
His mother's mind was racing. She thought to herself that her son must not have perhaps taken to gambling. How could he have acquired so much of money? Maybe he stole it from someone? Chanu is naughty, but then all children today are naughty. All sorts of thoughts assailed (went in) Chanumias mother's mind.
Finally, she said to him, *"Bring that money and show it to me."*
Chanumia ran off and brought the bag of money to show his mother. Chanumia's mother was beside herself. She had never ever dreamed of seeing so much of money all her life. Fuming, she asked him, *"Chanu! Speak the truth. Where did you get this money from?"*
"There was a stranger in the alley who was selling this", explained Chanu.
"Was he perhaps mad that he sold 53 rupees for this large sum of money? Tell me the truth; otherwise, I will beat you until you until you do." Saying this she grabbed hold of a shoe.

Looking at this mother in this state of anger, Chanumia was terrified. *"He, I, I, I'm speaking the truth"*, he cried.
"Where did you steal this money from, Chanu? Or where did you pick it up from? The last thing you expect me to believe is that you sold 53 rupees for all this money. Speak the truth and you will save yourself from a beating. I will beat you into pulp, regardless of whether today is Eid day. When your father comes home, I will tell him also and then you will face his wrath."
Chanumia did not know what to say. He sobbed and sobbed. Hearing his sobs, his grandmother came hobbling along from the other room, leaning on her walking stick, to see what was happening. She was about to console and comfort Chanumia, when her eyes fell on the wads of money. She blinked her eyes, cleaned out her spectacles, and spoke, *"Oho, where did all this money come from? Did money fall from the skies on this Eid Day?"*
"No mother, Chanu brought all this money…but he does not want to tell me the truth as to where he got all this from."
"O Chanu! Speak up! Wherefrom did you pick up such a large sum of money?" Grandmother spoke is such a harsh tone, that poor Chanumia did not know what to say anymore. Chanu was walking away when his mother gave him a warning shot with her shoe, and grandmother was lifting her walking stick to strike him, when the door opened.
Chanumia's elder brother walked into the house, and when he saw this scene he exclaimed, *"What's happening here?"* He looked pass his mother and granny and his eyes fell on the wads of

notes. He picked up one of the notes and looked at it intently. He then read out aloud, *"The Reserve Bank of Pakistan…..*

"Please accept this gift on behalf of Abdush Shakoor and Sons, who wish one and all a happy Eid Mubarak."

"Oho, these are fake notes!" exclaimed brother.

"What! Fake notes??" so saying the shoes fell off Chanu's mother's hands.

Fake?!? Granny's stick fell to the ground.

Through all this, the cries of Chanu grew even louder. He was now crying over his regret and grief of losing his 53 rupees.

"Come on, now Chanu! Crying won't help you. Greed for money is a great thing, and its result is also equally great. Come on now, you have learnt your lesson", said big brother consoling Chanu, and placed his hands on his head.

AFTER THREE HUNDERD YEARS

Faisal (the first), ruler of Iraq was in a deep sleep. He saw in a dream someone telling him, *"We are two Companions of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) buried on the banks of the Tigris. The course of the Tigris has altered and the water is seeping into our graves. It has already reached the grave of Huzaifah Yamaani (radhiallahu anhu), and the grave of Jaabir bin Abdillah (radhiallahu anhu) is also getting wet. Remove us from these graves and place us some distance from the banks."*

When the ruler of Iraq saw this vision he paid no attention to it. On the following night he saw the same dream and again paid no heed to it.

On the third night this vision appeared to the Grand Mufti, Noori Saeed. He immediately approached the prime minister and went to the king. When he narrated his dream to the king, then king exclaimed, *"I have also seen this dream twice."*

After having consulted, the king told the Grand Mufti, *"You first give me the ruling that I can exhume the graves, whereafter I will carry out the instruction in the dream."*

The Grand Mufti immediately gave the fatwa that the graves must be opened and that the blessed bodies be exhumed and moved to a safer place. This fatwa was made public and the word spread that on the coming Eidul Adha, the graves of these blessed Companions of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) will be opened and their bodies exhumed.

This news spread like wildfire and went far and wide. A note of interest is that this occurred on the days of Hajj and many Muslims from all over the world had gathered in the Blessed Lands for the Hajj. It was requested that the king of Iraq postpone the exhumation for a few days so that many more people may attend this occasion. In this way, Muslims from Hijaaz, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Turkey, Iran, Bulgaria, Russia, India, etc., etc. flocked to Iraq to witness this momentous event. This event was postponed for a few days. It was subsequently announced that this great event will take place ten days after the completion of Hajj.

Eventually the day came when the blessed graves were opened and countless Muslims from all over the world were present to witness this event. It was realised that the water had already entered the grave of Hadhrat Huzaifah Al-Yamaani (radhiallahu anhu) and that it began seeping through the grave of Hadhrat Jaabir bin Abdillah (radhiallahu anhu), even though the Tigris River was two furlongs distance from them.

First the body of Hadhrat Huzaifah Yamaani (radhiallahu anhu) was carefully exhumed and placed on a stretcher. The king, his Grand Mufti and other personalities lifted the stretcher with utmost respect and placed it upon their shoulders and carefully carried it into a glass coffin. The same procedure was carried out for the blessed body of Hadhrat Jaabir (radhiallahu anhu).

The shrouds of both the bodies were in perfect original condition, such that their beards were still neat.

By looking at the blessed bodies, one would never say that they were lying buried for the past three hundred years. In fact, it appeared that they had just passed away two to three hours ago. The most surprising part was that the eyes of both personalities were wide open. They were shining so brightly, that it was not possible to look directly at them.

Great doctors looked upon this scene and were dumbfounded. A famous German eye-specialist, who was also present, could not contain himself, he approached the Grand Mufti and told him, *"There can be no better proof that your religion of Islaam is Haqq. Hold out your hand, I am accepting Islaam---***لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله***."*

A German film company also recorded this entire event. With the consent of the king, they placed a huge screen close to the graves, so that this entire scene be displayed for all to see, where they stood. Otherwise, there would have been a great stampede and many people would have got hurt, in trying to get closer. Many Christians, Jews, Hindus, etc. accepted Islaam by witnessing this great event.

THE ETIQUETTES OF SLEEPING

That's correct…there are etiquettes regarding sleeping as well:

1. Sleeping at night is one of the signs of the many signs from Allaah Ta`ala. Allaah Ta`ala says that He has made sleep for relaxing, the night as a veil and the day for normal activity.
2. The house doors should be closed during the night. All utensils containing food and drink should be covered.
3. To sleep before performing the Esha Salaat is a sign of negligence and carelessness. After having performed Esha Salaat, one should not engage in futile and useless conversation. After having completed necessary duties, one should go and sleep.
4. If one has some necessary work to fulfil, then there will be no harm in remaining awake after Esha Salaat and fulfilling that work and then going to sleep.
5. Before one lies down on the bed, one should dust it out properly, and then lay down on one's right side.
6. At the time of sleeping one should place the right hand beneath the right cheek.
7. It is stated in the Hadith Shareef that one should not sleep with one foot on top the other which results in an immodest position.
8. It is also stated in a Hadith that Allaah Ta`ala does not like that a person sleeps upside down (i.e. on the stomach). The harm in this posture is that one's intestines may become dislodged.
9. It is advisable to take a siesta in the afternoon. This sleep will facilitate awakening for Tahajjud in the early morning.
10. Upon awakening, one should recite this dua,

الحمد لله الذي احيانا بعد ما اماتنا واليه النشور

"All Praises to That Being Who has awakened us after having giving us 'death' and unto Him is our resurrection."

11. Upon awakening one should make wudhu, thereby cleaning out the nose thrice.
12. If you see any pleasant dream then relate it to those for whom you have an affection.
13. If you see a nightmare, then 'spit' thrice on your left side and do not relate the dream to anyone. You should also turn sides before sleeping again. Recite thrice,

    اعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم

    Thereafter you should seek protection from the evil in the dream and it will not cause you any harm, Insha-Allaah Ta`ala.

NEW SCHOOL

Little Zeeshaan was pleasantly surprised as he entered the new school. The school comprised of two modern buidings, adjoining a beautiful garden and it even had a swimming pool for the pupils to bath in. There was even a swing situated next to it. The trains which took the children to school were also new.

The furniture in the classrooms was exceptionally beautiful and the floors were shining like glass. The blue glass in the window panes also looked nice. In short, everything was pleasing. However, Zeeshaan felt unfamiliar in these surroundings. The previous year when he was living in Hyderabad with his parents then his father admitted him to class one in the government school. That school, insofar as appearance was not as appealing, the fees were lower but he did not feel so strange and out of place there. Even the teachers here had strange, strange names.

The headmistress's name was Madam Da Silva. His class teacher's name was Miss Liza. The other teachers also had such names as Miss Jagi and another Miss Pinkie. Only the watchman's name was not strange, everyone called him Allaah Bakhsh.

Zeeshaan disliked one other aspect in this school, in that during assembly at his previous school some Surah of the Qur`aan Majeed would be recited whereas here they read from some strange book. This book was in the Urdu language, but besides the words 'Lord, Jesus and Maryam', Zeeshaan understood little else.

Madam Da Silva would read from this book herself. With her face plastered in makeup, her hair tied up on her head in some design which resembled a bird's nest, she appeared grotesque. She later distributed some colourful literature amongst the students and said, *"You should all read this literature, or let your parents read it to you. After the summer holidays, you will be writing examinations based on this literature. Prizes will be awarded for those who fare well."*

Zeeshaan received three books entitled, '*The message of Jesus the Messiah', 'The light of affection'* and '*He lives again'*.

Zeeshaan could barely read the titles of the books; however as for what was written inside he would have to read the whole book, which was not possible for him. He browsed through the pages and found pictures on every page. Zeeshaan understood these books to be made up of stories. He loved listening to stories, but to read them himself was quite another matter. He remembered that the teacher told them to let someone read it out for them, so he thought, *"I will let someone read it for me at home."*

When he arrived home he saw that there was a hive of activity and then realized that his aunt Zainab from Sukkar is coming to visit. Zeeshaan had a great affection for his aunt Zainab. She never scolded or frowned, but was always smiling and pleasant. She had a great love for children. She would relate to them nice stories. Zeeshaan thought to himself that he will show these books to his aunt Zainab and ask her to read them out to him.

That night he came to his aunt's room. *"O Zeeshaan! What are you doing up at this hour?"* She asked in surprise.
"Beloved aunt! I am not sleepy. I would like you to read me a story from here. I got these books from school today." Zeeshaan handed the books to his aunt.

His aunt took the book sand paged through them. As she paged through it, her eyes widened with astonishment. These books were filled with Christian kufr beliefs. It even related the false story of the crucifixion of Hadhrat Isaa (alayhis salaam) and had a shameful picture depicting this. *"Nauthubillah!"* she exclaimed.

"What happened, beloved aunt?" asked Zeeshaan in surprise.
"Which school do you attend, Zeeshaan?" she asked.
"Golden Cross Educational Nursery School", he replied.
"O!" exclaimed his aunt Zainab and said, *"Come with me."* she took hold of his hand led him to her sister's room.
"O Zainab, you are still not asleep? And Zeeshaan is also awake! You are being difficult", exclaimed Zeeshaan's mother, looking at him sternly.
"No, Farhat! Your lack of intelligence is more difficult upon me than Zeeshaan. To which Jahannum have you flung Zeeshaan? You do not even realize that you have placed your son in a Christian missionary school. Just take a look at this literature and see for yourself into what environment you have entrusted your son. It should not be that tomorrow our children become Christians or Jews because of our negligence and unwariness."
When Zeeshaan's mother realized the gravity of the situation and saw the literature she was totally dumbstruck. *"O Allah, Taubah! We have placed our son right into the hands of the kuffaar, without even realizing it…"*

"Taubah, O Allah, Taubah! Zeeshaan my son, your relationship with this school is now finished. I will discuss with your father and after making mashwarah with your aunt we will admit you to a suitable school where your Imaan and Aakhirat are safe."

IMAAM DAARUL HIJRAT, MAALIK BIN ANAS (RAHMATULLAH ALAYH)

Name, lineage and birth

Hadhrat Imaam's (rahmatullah alayh) name was Maalik and his nickname was Abu Abdillah. His title was Imaam Daarul Hijrat and his father's name was Anas. His lineage goes as follows, Maalik bin Anas bin Maalik bin Anas bin Abi Aamir.
Imaam Saheb's actual birthplace was in Yemen, wherefrom his grandfather made hijrat to Madinah Munawwarah. Amongst Imaam Saheb's family, his great grandfather was the first to accept Islaam during the era of Nubuwwat. Hadhrat Imaam Saheb was born in the year 93 A.H Some historians have stated that he was born in 94 A. H. and others say 95 A.H.

Blessed appearance

Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) was of medium height with a reddish/white complexion. His forehead was broad and he had wide eyes. He head a high and attractive nose. His beard was thick and so long that it covered his blessed chest.

Acquisition of knowledge

When Imaam Saheb reached the age of maturity then he drank from the fountains of knowledge of Madinah Munawwarah. He benefited from the students of the Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum), the Tabieen (rahmatullah alayhim). He acquired the knowledge of the Qur`aan Majeed from the Qaari of the time, Abu Radeem Naafi' bin Abdir Rahmaan (rahmatullah alayh), whose qiraa`at constituted the basis of the entire Islamic world.

Imaam Saheb began his quest for the knowledge of Hadith from a very young age. Imaam Saheb himself mentions that he would go to Hadhrat Naafi' (rahmatullah alayh) from a young age, and the latter would narrate Hadith to him. From this also we realise that the very first Sheikhul Hadith of Imaam Saheb, was Hadhrat Naafi' (rahmatullah alayh), who had spent 30 years in the service of Hadhrat Abdullah bin Umar (radhiallahu anhuma), and he had benefited greatly from this grand Sahaabi (radhiallahu anhu). He had also related Ahaadith from other senior Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum), like Hadhrat Aishah (radhiallahu anha), Hadhrat Umme Salmah (radhiallahu anha), Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (radhiallahu anhu) and Hadhrat Abu Saeed Khudri (radhiallahu anhu).

As long as Hadhrat Naafi' (rahmatullah alayh) remained alive, Imaam Saheb benefited from his discourses and attended them regularly. He had so much of confidence in his Ustaad, that he would say, *"If I heard a narration of Hadhrat Ibn Umar (radhiallahu anhu) from Naafi' (rahmatullah alayh), then it would not bother me to find any further confirmation of this (narration) from anyone else."* Both, the Ustaad and student, had attained such lofty ranks, that their chain of narration was regarded as a golden chain.

Teachers and Mentors

Besides Naafi' (rahmatullah alayh), Imaam Saheb had also acquired Ilm-e-Hadith from various other personalities. Amongst them was, Muhammad bin Shihaab Az-Zuhri, Ja'far Saadiq bin Muhammad, Muhammad bin Yahya Al-Ansaari, Muhammad bin Al-Munkadiril Madani, Abu Haazim, Yahya bin Saeed, Hishaam bin Urwa bin Zubair, Ismail bin Abi Hakeem, Zaid bin Aslam, Saeed bin Abi Saeed Al-Maqbari, Rabiah ibn Abi Abdir Rahmaan, Abdur Rahmaan bin Qaasim (rahmatullah alayhim ajmaeen), etc., etc. Besides the Shuyookh of Madinah Munawwarah, Imaam Saheb also narrated from other Shuyookh from Makkah, Basrah, Jazeera and Khurasaan.

Imaam Nawawi (rahmatullah alayh) has written in *Tahzeebul Asmaa* that the Shuyookh of Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) totalled around 900. Amongst them, there were 600 Tabieen and 300 Tabe Tabieen. Most of his Ustaads were from Madinah Munawwarah. All the various Ilm from Madinah Munawwarah was imbibed in his blessed chest, which led to his title of *Imaam Daarul Hijrat*.

Acquisition of the knowledge of Fiqh

Together with acquiring the knowledge of Hadith from Hadhrat Naafi' (rahmatullah alayh) and others, Imaam Saheb also studied and gained the knowledge of Fiqh. Just as he had studied and benefited in the science of Hadith from Hadhrat Naafi' (rahmatullah alayh), he benefited in the field and science of Fiqh from Hadhrat Abu Uthmaan Rabi'a Ar-Raai (rahmatullah alayh). Hadhrat Rabi'a (rahmatullah alayh) was amongst the most senior Tabieen residing in Madinah Munawwarah at the time. He had studied under the shadow of Hadhrat Anas and other Sahaabah (radhiallahu

anhum). Imaam Maalik, Yahya Ansaari, Hasan Basri, Sho`ba, Auza`i, Laith, etc., were amongst the fountains of knowledge during that era. Imaam Maalik's name became so attached to that of Rabi`a Ar-Raai, that his title became known as *Sheikh Maalik*.

Precaution in choice of Asaatiza

Since Imaam Saheb chose his Ustaads very carefully and with much precaution, hence the number of his Ustaads is less than that of others. He acquired knowledge from only those Ustaads who were masters in their fields and who were renowned for their honesty, truthfulness and integrity. This resulted in Imaam Saheb's narrations being authentic and reliable. Yahya bin Mu`een (rahmatullah alayh) who was regarded as one of the masters in the science of Hadith states, *"How can we be ahead of Imaam (Maalik)? We walk in the footsteps of Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh). If the name of any personality came up, then we would see if Imaam Saheb had acquired knowledge from him or not. If Imaam Saheb had not studied under him, then we would also avoid him."*

Someone once asked Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal (rahmatullah alayh) regarding a certain narrator, to which he responded, *"In my opinion he is reliable because Imaam Maalik had narrated from him."*

Respect for Hadith-e-Nabawi

The lessons of Hadith of Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) were such that they inspired awe into anyone witnessing them. Whenever Imaam Saheb came to deliver classes, he would take a bath or wudhu with utmost care, apply scent and comb his hair neatly. He would then enter the venue with utmost reverence and direct his attention to his audience with respect and decorum.

Someone once asked Imaam Saheb regarding this attitude of his when delivering classes, and he responded saying, *"I love that the Hadith of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) be honoured."*

Respect

One person once mentioned, whilst in conversation with someone, *"The soil in Madinah is bad."* Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) had come to hear of this and immediately issued a fatwa that this person be given 30 lashes and be imprisoned for period. Someone commented on his 'harsh' sentence, to which he responded, *"Such a person deserves to be executed. He deems that very soil on which the Beloved of Allaah Ta`ala gained solace, as being bad!"*

Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) spent his life in Madinah Munawwarah. Whenever he had the urge to relieve himself then he would go to the border of the Haram and relieve himself there, such that his body would be in Madinah Shareef but his waste matter fell inside the Haram area. Someone asked him why he did that, to which he replied, *"I have the fear that my demise not occur whilst I am not in Madinah Shareef, but at the same time I detest that my waste matter soil this blessed land."*

Whenever he walked in the alleys of Madinah Shareef, then he would always walk close to the walls and never in the centre of the pathways. When asked the reason for this, he replied, *"It is very possible that Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) treaded this path and (to walk on his footsteps) would be great disrespect."*

Imaam Shaafi (rahmatullah alayh) once asked Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh), *"You have the best of horses at your disposal, and yet you do not use them to ride in Madinah Munawwarah?"*

Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) replied, *"I do not deem it appropriate that the horse I ride tramples upon the very place where my Beloved (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) had treaded."*

Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) would say, *"Not a single night passes by for me that I am not honoured with the vision of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)."*

This is very clear that this was the result of this exceptional honour and respect he demonstrated. Look now at another astonishing incident of respect and honour.

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak (rahmatullah alayh) said that he once came in the presence of Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh). Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) was narrating Hadith. Whilst narrating Ahaadith, Imaam Saheb's face turned yellow. It appeared that Imaam Saheb was in great difficulty, but he continued delivering his lessons. Upon completion he turned to Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak and told him, *"Look at my back, please."*

When Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak removed the clothing from his back, he saw a scorpion there. The scorpion had stung Imaam Saheb at least 17 times. Ibn Mubaarak (rahmatullah alayh) said, *"Why did you not inform us (earlier)?"*

In reply, Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) said, *"I exercised patience in honour and respect of the Hadith of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)."* (That is, he would rather bear the stinging of the scorpion than to abandon his narration of Ahaadith for that lesson!)

Those who have been stung by a scorpion will know well the pain and difficulty experienced by their sting. Many people would not be able to bear even a single sting, and yet Imaam Saheb had endured 17!

Abdullah ibn Mubaarak (rahmatullah alayh) says that he was once travelling with Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) when during their conversation he happened to ask regarding a certain Hadith of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) immediately reprimanded him saying, *"I did not expect this of you that you will ask me regarding a Hadith of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) whilst we are walking on the road!"*

He regarded it disrespectful to the Hadith of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) that it be discussed whilst walking on the road.

Once Hadhrat Hishaam bin Ammaar (rahmatullah alayh) asked Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) regarding a Hadith, whilst he was standing. Imaam Saheb deemed this so disrespectful and inappropriate that he ordered 20 lashes for him. He then took pity on Hishaam (rahmatullah alayh) and instead of one, narrated 20 Ahaadith for him.

Once Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) was standing, when Qaadhi Jareer bin Abdul Hameed (rahmatullah alayh) asked him regarding a Hadith. Imaam Saheb ordered that he (Qaadhi Saheb) be imprisoned for a few days. When asked the reason for this, he replied, *"It is appropriate that of all people, Qaadhi Saheb be taught a lesson."*

LITTLE SERVANT

Friends! Today we will introduce you to one of the beloved children of Madinah Munawwarah. His name was Anas (radhiallahu anhu). His mother was Umme Sulaim (radhiallahu anha), a Mahram relative of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Anas (radhiallahu anhu) was still a small lad when his

father, Maalik passed away. Umme Sulaim thereafter married Hadhrat Abu Talha (radhiallahu anhu), who now became the step father of Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu).

Friends! Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik (radhiallahu anhu) had great respect, intelligence and astuteness from a young age. He had great respect for his mother and rendered good service to Abu Talha (radhiallahu anhu).

Friends! During the early days after Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had migrated from Makkah Mukaramah to Madinah Munawwarah, Hadhrat Umme Sulaim (radhiallahu anha) approached him as made a request, *"O Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)! Anas is an intelligent boy. You should keep him with you and he will be of great service."*

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) then kept Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik (radhiallahu anhu) with him. Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu) then served Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) with all his heart and soul. He remained constantly with Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and would aspire to serve Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) at every gesture. There were times when it was not even necessary for Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) to say anything, and Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu), through his astuteness would run to carry out the desire of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had a baby son, by the name of Ibrahim. He was merely a few months old. He was born in a village close to Madinah Shareef, at the home of a Sahaabi, Hadhrat Abu Saif (radhiallahu anhu). Abu Saif was a blacksmith. A blacksmith is a person who melts iron in a fire and shapes it into various items, like armoury, utensils, etc. because of this trade the home of a blacksmith was always filled with smoke.

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would visit the home of Abu Saif in order to see his son, Ibrahim. Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu) would run ahead of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and forewarn Abu Saif (radhiallahu anhu) to stall his activity so that the smoke does not cause inconvenience to Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would go there and pick his son up and play with him for a while before returning.

Once a seamstress invited Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) for a meal, she prepared a meal of pumpkin, meat and gravy. Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) accepted the invitation and Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu) accompanied him. Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) loved to eat pumpkin and he sought out the pumpkin pieces in the gravy. When Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu) saw this, then he also acquired a taste and love for pumpkin, because it was beloved to Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). This was the reason why Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu) always had pumpkin cooked in his home.

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) once sent him on an errand. He affectionately and jokingly said that he will not go, but knew in his heart that he will fulfil Nabi's (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) wishes. He set off to complete the errand but got delayed by becoming engaged in some play with other boys.

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was passing by when he saw Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu) playing with the other boys. Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) affectionately caught hold of Hadhrat Anas's nape. When he turned around he saw the beaming countenance of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), who smiling asked him, *"Anas, you have not completed the errand I sent you on?"*

Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu) replied, *"O Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)! I am on my way."* So saying, he ran off to complete task.

Once Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) confided a secret to him and told him not to divulge it to anyone else. He revealed it to no one, not even his mother when he returned home.

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) showered much dua onto Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu), out of pleasure of his excellent service. Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu) had much Barkat in his life and lived to a very ripe age. Allaah Ta`ala also blessed him with an abundance of wealth and sustenance. All this was the effect of the dua of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

HOSPITALITY

To be invited (for a meal) is an honour. The host has extended his honour by giving an invitation, and it is his right that the guest arrives on time. The host is always pleased and happy to welcome his guest on time.

One should take into consideration one's clothes, time and the season. Very bright, gaudy and flashy garments are contrary to the honour and dignity of the host.

One should take into consideration one's physical cleanliness, especially making sure that one's teeth are cleaned and that some scent is applied.

Maintain a pleasant countenance, smile and engage in light-hearted conversation. Do not make fun of others.

Do not steal the show. Honourable and respectable people do not stare all around.

When you are dishing out food for yourself take into consideration how much you will be able to eat for that time. In fact, you should serve little less than what you estimate. There is no harm in taking again a second or third time.

Sit straight up. Do not slouch. To sit with one leg on the other is also regarded as disrespectful. Do not burp in front of others. Try to suppress it. If there is a real need then place your hand in front of your mouth and do not open your mouth wide.

At the time of leaving, take permission from the host. Thank him sincerely, not for the food but rather for the time spent. The objective was not the eating of the food but the pleasure of having met and spending time together.

At a hotel or restaurant

Since there may be occasions when we need to stay in a hotel and take service from others, we will share a few pointers in that regard:

Waiters depend and rely on receiving tips from the patrons. It is therefore appropriate that you do give a tip to the waiter that serves you.

How much? There are some rules pertaining to this, which may differ from country to country. Normally a 5 to 10% of the bill is an appropriate amount.

When staying at the hotel, then one should not be destructive or carry out any untoward act. Do not break the hotel rules and abide by them.

When calling a waiter in the restaurant, then do not raise your voice excessively. If you are buying food for others, then do ask them what they prefer.

Before paying the bill, check it properly.

When using their toilets, then keep them clean. When washing up your hands, keep their basins clean.

SHINING FACES

Today was the fourth day. Upon returning from Madrasah, he ran to the mirror and stood there for some time, looking at his face. He saw no change, so he rushes to the bathroom. He took a bath and scrubbed himself properly, and even then saw no difference.

His mother witnessed this scene for three days now, and she could no longer contain herself, *"Thaaqib, my son, what is the problem? Everyday when you return from Madrasah, you look into the mirror. What's the matter?"*

He remained silent and offered no reply.
"Come here, my son!" his mother affectionately called out to him.

She placed her hand on his head and asked him, *"Tell me what is really going on."*

"Mother! Last month I started with Amma Para. Five days ago, Qaari Abdur Rahmaan Saheb gave me sabaq in Surah Taariq. In the third Aayat of this Surah are the words, 'An-Najm Thaaqib'. I asked Qaari Saheb what it meant and he replied that it means 'shining star'. Mother, you always told me that a person's name has an effect on that person, that is also why Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) gave instruction to always keep nice names. My name means 'shining', but there is no sign of any shine on me." Thaaqib was by now very sad. His mother listened to him and remained very silent. She had no words to console her little boy. In order to stall him a while, she said, *"Come let us eat first and then we'll talk."* Quietly, he went to wash his hands.

In this manner the entire week passed. By that time, he was already completed with half the Para. He concentrated on his Madrasah work and not much on play. During the day, he would glance in the mirror occasionally, lower his head and continue on his way.

One day, whilst he was reciting his sabaq for his Ustaad, he came to Surah Taariq and when he came to words, *An-Najmu Thaaqib*, he stopped. His Ustaad said, *"Read on, son."*
He remained silent. Qaari Saheb looked at him intently, but he remained mum.

"What is the problem, son? Why are you silent? I have noticed that for many days now, you are have been exceptionally quiet." Saying this, Qaari Saheb, closed the Qur`aan Majeed.

Thaaqib looked at him once and lowered his head. Tears were flowing from his eyes. Finally he said, *"Qaari Saheb! When I first read this Surah and asked you, you told me that the meaning of Thaaqib is 'shining'. My mother always said that a good name has an effect on a person. But I do not shine at all."*
"O, so that is the problem!" said his Ustaad, smiling.

"Look, son! What your mother told you is correct. That is also the reason why Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) told us to keep good names, and that names like Abdullah and Abdur Rahman are most beloved to Allaah Ta`ala.

As for your name, you should know that together with a name, the actions of people also have an effect on them. If someone has the name of Abdur Rahmaan, and he does the actions of shaitaan, then his name will not benefit him. If a person's actions are good, then he will attain noor in his appearance. When children are born, then Allaah Ta`ala places a noor in their hearts. When they do good deeds as they grow older, then this noor increases, which spreads through the entire body and limbs and this person's face acquires a noor. Now, if you also do good deeds, like performing your Salaat on time, learn your sabaq, respect your parents and Ustaads, abstain from watching television, listening to music and pictures, if you do not wear the clothes of the kuffaar, etc., then Insha-Allah Ta`ala, your face will also have that noor."

"Yes, Qaari Saheb", said Thaaqib, whose face now had some new glow.
He now began making an earnest effort at performing his Salaat on time, he concentrated fully on his Madrasah work, showed utmost respect for his parents. He also tore up his kuffaar-style shirts and trousers and burnt all his pictures.

After a few days, he passed by the mirror and his eyes fell on his reflection. He stopped and looked carefully, and without doubt, his face had acquired a lustre and it was shining. He had now become a genuine, *Najmuth Thaaqib*.

THE REALITY OF HUMILITY

Our seniors tell us that the word *Tawaadhu* is an Arabic word, which means to understand oneself as being insignificant. The mere saying that one is insignificant is not in reality *Tawaadhu*. This has become customary nowadays where people refer to themselves as humble, by using words such as *'Ahqar' (insignificant), Na Cheez (useless),* etc., etc. (when referring to themselves).

They are under the false impression that by using such words for themselves they attain humility. Humility in reality is not the titles one refers to oneself with, rather it is to understand and believe oneself to be useless and insignificant. That is, to believe that one has no worth, and that whatever good one does carry out is purely through the grace, guidance and Fadhl of Allaah Ta'ala, and that it was not because of any achievement from oneself. This in reality is *Tawaadhu*. If one attains this stage, then regardless of whether one refers to oneself as *Haqeer, Na Cheez*, etc., it does not matter. When a person reaches this stage of *Tawaadhu*, then Allaah Ta`ala raises such a person in ranks.

The *Tawaadhu* of the Buzrugs

When we read or listen about the Buzrugs, then we realise that these personalities regarded themselves as so insignificant that in their own eyes they held absolutely no value to themselves. In this regard, Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thaanwi (rahmatullah alayh) states (what he had heard from countless Buzruqs), *"My condition is such that I regard every Muslim, in their real state and kaafir, in possibility, as being better than me. I regard a Muslim as better than me because he is a Muslim and has Imaan, and a kaafir because there is a possibility that Allaah Ta`ala blesses him with Imaan, and that he surpasses me."*

Once, the close Khalifah of Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thaanwi (rahmatullah alayh), Hadhrat Moulana Khair Muhammad Saheb (rahmatullah alayh), asked Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Hasan Saheb (rahmatullah alayh), *"Whenever I sit in the gathering of Hadhrat Thaanwi, then to me it appears that every one sitting there is better than me and I am the worst."*

Hadhrat Mufti Hasan Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) commented that his condition is exactly the same. The two of them then approached Hadhrat Thaanwi (rahmatullah alayh) to ask him whether this condition of theirs is a good one or bad. When they asked him after explaining to him, he replied, *"There is nothing to worry about. Since you two have asked me, I will tell you that whenever I sit in the Majlis, then I regard everyone else to be better than I and regard myself as the worst and most insignificant of all."*

This is the reality of Tawaadhu. When this real meaning of Tawaadhu manifests itself in one, then one regards himself to be even worse than animals.

The Tawaadhu of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)

Hadhrat Anas (radhiallahu anhu) states in one Hadith, *"When any person approached Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) to make Musaafaha (shake hands), then Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would not pull away his hands, until the next persons extended his hands. He would not turn his face until the next person turned his face. Whenever he sat in a gathering he would not place his knees in front of someone (that is, he would not sit haughtily)."* [Kitaabuz Zuhd, Abdullah ibn Mubaarak, page 143]

It has been related in some narrations that initially, Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would sit in a gathering just like any other person. There would be no distinction between him and others. There was no distinction between him (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum) in sitting or walking. However, it later transpired that whenever a stranger came into town, then it would be difficult for him to distinguish Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) from the rest of the Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum). Another issue was that if the gathering was large then it would be difficult for those sitting at the back to see and meet Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). The Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum) made a request to Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) that they construct a slightly raised platform for him so that he may easily be recognised by newcomers. This would also make it easier for all to hear and see him (sallallahu alaihi wasallam). Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) gave his consent and a small chair was made, upon which Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would sit when delivering a discourse.

AN ISSUE OF ENTHUSIASM

The Battle of Uhud, owing to its severity and difficulty, became a historical battle. This Battle gained importance for a number of reasons. One of the main reasons was that this Battle was a great test for the believers.

A famous incident which took place during the thick of this battle was when Hadhrat Abu Dujaana (radhiallahu anhu) came to Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and asked, *"O Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)! What is the right of this sword?"*

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) replied, *"Strike the enemy with it, until it bends."* Abu Dujaana (radhiallahu anhu) said, *"I accept the sword with its right."* Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) then gave him his own sword.

Hadhrat Abu Dujaana (radhiallahu anhu) took the sword and strutted away, placing a red cloth over his head, plunged into the thick of the enemy. He fought extremely bravely and displayed a perfect example of valour and gallantry. [Seeratun Nabawiyya, Ibn Hishaam, page 249, vol. 3]

During all this, an interesting incident took place. He explains himself, *"I saw a person who was urging and inciting the battle. I made my way towards this person and lifted my sword to strike, when this person cried out. Only then did I realise that it was a woman. At that moment I restrained my hand, thereby keeping the sword of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) free from the blood of a woman."* [Ibid, page 202, vol.3]

That woman was Hind binti Uqbah. According to another Sahaabi, Abu Dujaana had lifted his sword but halted himself. If one contemplates then one will realise that it was a very delicate situation. To keep the advice of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in mind at such a juncture, that women and children not be harmed, was indeed a great feat. To restrain oneself and return a sword to its sheath after it had already tasted blood, is an achievement very difficult to accomplish and un imaginable in our times.

From this incident we can gauge the great extent of success of the taleem (teachings) of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). We can see how the Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum) were able to contain and control their enthusiasm and feelings. All their actions were under the banner of Islaam. Even at great and testing moments, they were able to filter their actions and thoughts and act with cool and stable minds. Even in moments of anger, were they able to control themselves. This was owing to the excellence of their Imaan.

POOR MILK

Anwar's face was blown up. His school friend was surprised and wondered what the matter was, but he could not ask anything while classes were on. During the break, his friends surrounded him, and asked, *"It seems that today something serious must have happened at home that your face is blown up?"*

Anwar did not reply, but merely looked from side to side.
"Look friend! You will not get away, what happened? Tell us."
"Yes! His mouth was closed the entire morning. You have not spoken a word to anyone today. Until you do not tell us what has happened, we will keep on standing here, right until the end of the break."

"Okay then, I will tell you, although it is not such a serious issue. Last night before going to sleep, my mother told me to go to the kitchen and put the milk into the fridge, lest it goes sour. I replied to her in the affirmative, but I forgot to put it into the fridge. In the morning when my mother came to the kitchen she saw that the milk was still out, and as you are all aware it is the summer season now, and naturally the milk went sour. Mother was very angry and told me a thing or two, which she followed with a couple of slaps as well. Ever since then I am upset. I have no idea what happened to the milk. If it is not placed in the fridge then why does it go sour? Do any of you know why the milk goes sour?"

They all looked at each other, without giving an answer. Their teacher, who was listening to their conversation, called to them, *"Children, come over here! I will explain to you how milk goes sour."*

They all hurried over to the classroom and sat down in their places, when the teacher began, *"This happens to all of us, where we forget to put certain things into the fridge and it goes bad. The issue is that when milk or any other perishable item, is kept at around 10 to 15 degrees centigrade, it is safe from the harmful effects of bacteria. When we forget anything in the kitchen, the temperature there is not cool, then the bacteria enters the milk and foodstuff. When this bacteria mixes with the milk, then it goes sour and becomes bad."*

"But, sir! We have heard that bacteria is our friend?" asked Farouq.

"Yes, that is also true. Some bacteria are friendly to us and some harmful. Some bacteria make us, our animals and plants sick. Like this some spoil our foodstuff as you now know. You are also aware that gravy normally goes bad quickly in summer, whereas in winter it lasts for two to three days. The reason is that during the winter months the temperatures are low, which slows down the bacterias." Saying this, the teacher stood up and left. Now the entire class learnt why food goes bad in the heat.

SOCIAL ETIQUETTE

Every Muslim has the following rights over other Muslims; when he meets him, he must make salaam, when he is called then he must answer, when he is invited then he must accept, when he sneezes and says *Alhamdulillaah,* then the reply of *Yarhamukallaah* must be offered, when he is ill then he must be visited, when he passes away then his burial must be attended and whatever he likes for himself he should like for his fellow Muslim.

- When you enter the house, make salaam to the inmates
- There is also reward in showing affection to the younger ones
- Do not stretch your feet towards anyone in a gathering
- Whenever you meet someone, then do so with a pleasant countenance, in fact you should offer a smiling face, so that the person you are meeting gets pleased
- The best of names are Abdullaah and Abdur Rahmaan
- Never keep names which have an annotation of pride or have an evil meaning
- When relating an unsubstantiated incident, then refrain from saying, *"People say that…"*, because this gives the impression that such talk is reliable and true. In essence do not speak such things which are not substantiated. (proven)
- Do not use respectful and honourable terms for sinners and evil people
- Evil poetry is evil. An excess of good poetry is also not appropriate if it impedes one's worldly and Deeni duties
- Do not be excessively elaborate in your speech
- Always maintain moderation in your speech and conversations. Do not be so brief that your meaning is not understood, neither should you be so lengthy that people become bored.

ETIQUETTE IN CONVERSATION

There are also etiquettes in conversations. People should understand your speech. Hadhrat Ali (radhiallahu anhu) said, *"A man is hidden behind his tongue."* That is, until he does not speak, his flaws and errors will be concealed. Since silence is a good trait, therefore when a person remains silent, then this goodness in him is manifested to others.

Let us know discuss the etiquettes in conversations:

1). Always try to keep your speech soft (not inaudible, where you cause inconvenience to others, rather you should not talk in a very loud and harsh voice). It has been said that Allaah Ta`ala did not create a bone in the tongue and He has kept the tongue soft, therefore, the speech which emanates therefrom should also be soft. A buzrug was once very upset at a youngster and reprimanded him. The youth told him, *"Hadhrat, notwithstanding my shortcoming, you should be soft with me, because neither am I worse than Firoun nor are you better than Moosa (alaihi salaam)."*

Allaah Ta`ala had appointed Hadhrat Moosa (alaihi salaam) to preach to Firoun, but told him to be soft in his speech.

2). That mercy which Allaah Ta`ala descends on softness He does not do so for harshness.

3). Whatever we speak, must be good. It will be of benefit to us and to others. Allaah Ta`ala instructs us to speak good things to others. [Surah Baqarah]

4). Do not speak to others in accusing terms, where they are belittled because of your speech.

5). Always speak what is true and correct. If people pay more heed to this, then there will be less arguments and quarrels. Allaah Ta`ala says, *"O you who believe! Fear Allaah and speak the truth. Allaah will make your task easy and forgive your sins."* [Surah Ahzaab]

6). Soft speech is equivalent to sadaqah.

7). Abstaining from frivolous talk is a sign of piety. Whatever emerges from the tongue of man, is recorded by the angels.

8). It is mentioned in one Hadith that whosoever has Imaan in Allaah Ta`ala and the Aakhiraat (hereafter), should speak what is good or remain silent.

9). It is stated in a Hadith that a single speech can be the cause of Allaah Ta`ala's happiness for the speaker until Qiyaamah or a means of His anger.

10). Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would sometimes repeat one sentence thrice so that the listeners can understand. His speech was very explicit and clear, which the listeners would understand.

11). Always keep your speech concise and brief, so that you do not burden the listeners.

PAKISTAN

1. The largest historical building in Pakistan is the Lahore Shaahi Fort
2. The old name for Pakistan's famous town Raulpindi, was Gazni Pur
3. The first ship constructed in Pakistan was the Al-Abbaas
4. The longest railway track is called Khawjak

THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE

This is a story of a 'civilised' jungle. Just like every jungle has its own laws, so too did this jungle, where the most powerful animal stayed with peace and contentment and all the smaller and weaker animals lived in fear and trepidation. Their day always began with apprehension and at night they would sleep only after making dua for their safety.

The rulers and administrators of this jungle were the monkeys. In actual fact, the lions were sent into 'retirement' by a sly trick of the monkeys. The lions never showed an interest in ruling this jungle and the administration thereof was left to the monkeys.

Children! We will now secretly look into a classroom of a private school in this jungle, when the little one in this jungle are acquiring their education. Miss Me`me` (the goat), with her spectacles hanging on the edge of her nose is conducting classes.

“Rabbit, you tell us why the seventh Great War took place.”
“The seventh great war in jungle history was between the dogs and cats. This war took a great physical and financial toll on the parties.” Saying this, the little rabbit remained silent. Miss Me`me then indicated with her hand towards little elephant and said, *“You give us more details about this war.”*
“Ouch!” screamed the little monkey. Miss Me`me looked around in astonishment, and the little monkey cried out in pain, *“Miss…this child of an elephant had placed his foot onto mine.”*

The elephant lifted his foot and freed the little monkey’s foot. After this little incident was resolved, Miss Goat said, *“Begin!”*
The elephant began, *“It all began when Mano (cat) clawed at Tony (dog) and in retaliation, Tony chewed Mano’s ears. Mano then set Tony’s bone factory alight, which resulted in the two dog workers who were there at the time to be burnt.”*

“No, no! We never set the factory alight. That is a lie”, called out three little cats, cutting the elephant’s talk short.
Other mischievous animals now found reason to butt in. They all started mimicking the meows of the cats and the class became like a fish market.

“O ho, what is happening now?” asked Miss Me`me lifting her spectacles straight.

“The children of the cat have disturbed the class. You should come here and be chicken (a form of punishment), and elephant should continue with the talk.”

“Well the following day, the dogs took their revenge on the cats and a full scale war began.”

Saying this, the elephant, stopped to take a breath and the fowl and duck started joking in class. Miss Goat saw them and called to them and told them to also sit chicken.

The donkey stood up, pointed towards the fowl and said, *“Miss, he was always a chicken!”* saying this, the entire class started roaring in laughter. Miss Goat, managed with some difficulty to maintain quiet in the class and the elephant continued, *“After the war, the monkey brotherhood met with the senior dogs and cats and showed them the harms of the war. They then managed to engage the most ferocious animals in the jungle and took control from the previous leader, the lion. They then formed an Animal Unity Forum. Mr. Owl was made the chairman…the bear, elephant, cheetah, wolf and jackal were appointed to the peace council.”*

As he was speaking, the bell rang for break. All the little animals called out with joy and ran out of the class.

Children! In this story you have read about the inappropriate and unrefined behaviour of the animals, in that:
1. They make life difficult in class for the teacher,
2. They poke fun at her,
3. They shout in unison,
4. They are rowdy in class,
5. They make fun of one another
6. They cut in, when others are speaking and
7. They make a great noise during breaks.

Children! You should all save yourselves from such actions and behaviour, because these are not the actions of human beings. Good children are those who save themselves from such actions and they advise others to do likewise.

HADHRAT ABDULLAH IBN ABBAAS (radhiallahu anhu)

This great Sahaabi (radhiallahu anhu) earned the following duas from Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) because of the service, honour and respect he showed for him (sallallahu alaihi wasallam):

"O Allaah! Bless him with the understanding of the Deen and the interpretation of The Kitaab."
Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Abbaas (radhiallahu anhu) had made great strides and efforts at acquiring Deeni Ilm. He had also attained a high level of humility and modesty. It never occurred to him to be given preference because he was the cousin of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and a close family member.

Had he counted on the fact that he was a close relative of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then he would have never attained such high ranks purely because of this honour.

In his quest for knowledge he had undergone such great difficulties and toiled so much, that such effort is unheard of in our times, amongst our students.

His condition was such that whenever he required anything (knowledge) of anyone, then he would not call that person to him, but would go to the person himself. If he realised that the person was taking rest, then he would wrap himself up in his shawl and wait on that person's doorstep, ignoring the dust and sand which settled on his body.

When this person emerged from his home, then he would enquire from this person what he needed to know. This person would tell him that he is the cousin of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), and he should not have undergone such difficulty. He would tell Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas (radhiallahu anhu) to have summonsed him rather. Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas (radhiallahu anhu) would say that he is the one seeking knowledge; hence he needed to present himself, regardless of difficulty.

Sometimes he would wait for a ling time, but he never had the notion that the person should abandon his own needs and come to him.

The fruits of all this effort of his, earned him expertise in the fields of Tafseer, Hadith, Fiqh, poetry, speech and many other fields of knowledge.

Notwithstanding his young age, he acquired the status amongst the senior Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum) of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Hadhrat Umar (radhiallahu anhu) would place him amongst the senior Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum) from whom he would take advice.

Hadhrat Umar (radhiallahu anhu) was asked as to why he would consult with Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Abbaas (radhiallahu anhu) notwithstanding the presence of many senior Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum). He replied, *"He is a well-spoken, intelligent and intellectual lad."*

Abu Saleem asked Taawoos Tabiee (rahmatullah alayh) why he only referred to this young lad, in the presence of the many senior Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum)? He replied, *"I have seen that many Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum) of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), when they discuss any mas`alah, they would refer to him."* Allaah Ta`ala had also gifted him such that whenever he spoke, he did so in such a sweet way, where the listener becomes engrossed.

He always had a crowd of people surrounding him. He had also bequeathed his entire life to the imparting of Deeni knowledge. At times there would be so many students outside his home, that passer-bys would find it difficult. He would satisfy the thirst of everyone seeking knowledge with ease and contentment, and none would leave his threshold disappointed.

When knowledge and practice enters one's heart, then that heart becomes illuminated and shines brightly. Such fear of Allaah Ta`ala overwhelms that heart that everything else pales into insignificance.

Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas (radhiallahu anhu) was the cousin of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and also from the side of Nabi's (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) blessed wife, Hadhrat Maimoonah (radhiallahu anha), he (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) was his maternal uncle (Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was the husband of his mother's sister). [Seeratus Sahaabah, page 235, vol. 2]

He remained in the service of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) during his childhood, where he displayed a great degree of love and affection. Allaah Ta`ala made him such a paragon of knowledge that people flocked to him from all sides, and he imparted knowledge and made Tableegh. He never remained behind in making Tableegh and Jihaad. [Ibid, page 250/271, vol. 2]

Notwithstanding this high rank and level he attained, his eyes were always wet with the tears he shed in fear for Allaah Ta`ala.

With this constant fear of Allaah Ta`ala, high level of Taqwa and purity, after having reaped the fruits of sacrificing for the Deen and its Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), in the year 28 A.H., when this great servant of Islaam, after having spent his entire life, from childhood to old-age in the service of the Deen, was finally laid to rest in his grave, a voice from the unseen called out,

"O contented soul! Return to your Rabb, pleased with Him and He pleased with you." [Surah Fajr, Aayat 46/7]

THE BLESSING OF ABSTAINING FROM INTEREST AND FOLLOWING THE SUNNAT

The following incident has been reproduced from the work of Hadhrat Moulana Zufar Ahmad Uthmaani (rahmatullah alayh), *Anwarun Nazar fi Aathaariz Zufar*, which appears in the second volume.

Hadhrat Moulana states, *"During the year 1933, whilst I was in the Madrasah Rander in Rangoon, the late Molvi Zufar Ali Khaan, came there and arrangements were made for him to deliver lectures at various venues. His first lecture was to take place in the Surti Jaami Musjid. The topic under discussion was 'Islamic Jihaad', but during the lecture, he touched on the subject of usury. I told him, 'Do not get involved in discussing this issue now, continue with your talk. I will, afterwards or at a later stage, delve into this issue.'*

He discontinued this issue and carried on with his subject under discussion. After completion he left, and it was already time for meals. Since I was also invited for meals I also presented myself and found that quite a few people were gathered there. I found it appropriate to discuss the mas'ala on usury at that moment so I began,

'Zufar Ali Khaan Saheb! I am not going to speak with proofs, however I will prove the issue of usury by way of an incident. In front of you are the traders of Rangoon, and they will bear testimony that a year ago a large fire destroyed many shops in Rangoon. When the fire reached the

shop of one prominent businessman, his son and workers started running towards him. He was at that moment in the Musjid performing Salaat. They told him that there was a fore in the bazaar and that the fire had reached his shop. They told him to hasten and come to see what is happening. With much composure he said, 'I don't take or give usury and every year I fully discharge my Zakaat. Be at ease and do not worry, because Inshallah no harm will come to my shop.'

When his workers returned they were astounded to see that indeed the fire had left his shop untouched and had caught onto his neighbouring shop. The shops all around him were alight and only his shop was saved.

Another incident pertains to one of the two large Share companies in Rangoon, which does not deal in usury. It constructs buildings which are given for rent. Each Share cost twenty five rupees and the returns were in the region of ten rupees. The sale of shares has now terminated and whoever wishes to purchase shares will have to wait for any of the shareholders to first sell their shares. Today the value of the twenty five rupee shares is worth more than one thousand five hundred rupees.

The second company's shares cost ten rupees each and the annual return on each share is one rupee. At times it is even less than this. The present value of the shares is still ten rupees. The shareholders of the former company are by far better off than those of the latter company, which deals deeply in usury, the cornerstone of modern business practice. The condition of present times has deteriorated because of American influenced usury. Almost every country in the world is indebted to America, and they all pay interest.

Islaamic History bears testimony to the fact that the progress of Muslims in trade was owing to the fact that Muslims abstain from dealing in interest. In fact they prospered because their businesses were structured on the Islaamic principles pertaining to partnership, Mudhaarabat, etc, etc. they were so blessed in their businesses that it is impossible to find any similitude today.

There is a historical incident regarding a trader from Baghdad, who took a large amount of goods for trading. Many of his friends and associates also included their wares with his, for him to trade with. They were to share in the profits. At that time an old lady was also standing by. The other traders laughed at her and commented, 'Dear mother, are you also indulging in trade?' She asked, 'What profit are you hoping to reap?' The trader said, 'We hope to double every six months.' She gave him one rupee and asked him to include this. He took the money and put it in his pocket. He came back after twelve years and calculated the share of each person. The old lady was also there. The trader said to his assistant, 'Give the lady five thousand rupees.'
The old lady said, 'It is not like that. Did you not say that the profits will double every six months?'

The trader replied, 'That is so.' She then said, 'Calculate properly and give my share.' The trader then told his assistant, 'Give her two hundred and fifty thousand rupees.' The old lady took the money and walked off happily. The assistant said, ' You have given the old lady quite a lot.' The trader said, 'I did not use her money in trade. It is still in my pocket. Had I used her money, then she would have been liable for much more.'

Can we find such an example today, where one rupee earns 250 000 rupees? This was the benefit of following the Shariah and abstaining from interest."

DO NOT DO UNTO OTHERS BY MISTAKE

He was a great Aabid. His only desire was to engage in Ibaadat. That is the reason why he would awaken at nights and leave the house to go to the Musjid and engage in Ibaadat, where there is no disturbance, no crying children or other interruptions in his ibaadat.

Tonight, like all other nights, he came into the Musjid to perform his Tahajjud, however tonight there was someone sleeping in the Musjid. He went into one corner and began his Salaat. This traveller, who was very tired after his journey, was in a very deep sleep, and he was snoring loudly. Due to this excessive and loud snoring, this Aabid could not find the peace and contentment he preferred in his Ibaadat. He broke his Salaat, woke the sleeping person and explained to him that his snoring is disturbing his Salaat. He then went back and started his Salaat, but the traveller could not avoid his snoring and soon he was at it again. Again he broke his Salaat and again he woke the traveller and explained to him. No sooner had he returned to continue his Salaat, the traveller started his snoring again. Now the Aabid was really angry and he once again broke his Salaat and went over to the sleeping man. He then put him in such a sleep, wherefrom he would never need to awaken him again, and neither will he be ever snoring again so as to disturb anyone. He then, calmly went back and peacefully completed his Salaat.

In the morning when the people came for Fajr Salaat, they asked who had murdered the poor traveller. The Aabid explained to them that the traveller had been disturbing him in his Salaat with his excessive snoring, so this was the result thereof.

When I first read this story I was astounded, and sensed anger at the Aabid's shameful deed, but at the same time I also smiled at the stupidity of his act. However now I don't find it astounding anymore, and his stupidity does not anymore bring a smile to my face.

Yes! When I look at those people who people call Muslims; those who regard their Deen as a means of salvation; those who call others to the Deen.

Yes! When I see them or hear about them; how they trample and oppress those beneath them in order to please their superiors, then I place my hands over my ears.

When I think then I realise that the Aabid did what he did in order to please his Creator (that is what his mind fathomed). However, here we have people perpetrating heinous acts in order to please other creations. That Aabid did it (committed his error) in order to attain an everlasting success and peace, whereas these people carry out their evils in exchange for a temporary worldly enjoyment.

O my beloved brothers! If you are also afflicted with this calamity. If you are under a sycophant (one who survives on flattery of the rich and powerful), and who is bound by the fetters of flattery, then you should not be overly concerned. You should take comfort in the fact that:

One day, for certain Qiyaamah will dawn. On that Day the scales of justice will be presented. Whatever oppression is levelled against you today is only a means of your rewards being piled high. This is that era which Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) spoke about and stated that such a time of fitnah will arise when the actions of people belie their claim. Their actions will be such that the Shariah disapproves of.

Yes, there is a lesson in this for us that we should not carry out such actions on our underlings which we will regret. A Muslim is not a believer until he likes for his Muslim brother what he prefers for himself.

THE CORRECT METHOD OF ASKING

Beloved Children! You all have the desire to listen to interesting and exciting stories. Like that, everyone likes to listen to and narrate, but children specifically like listening to stimulating and exciting stories. Children also have very sharp ears. Whenever anything is said in the house, children are sure to hear it. Externally children appear very innocent and naive, but they are very sly and cunning. Even whilst they appear to be playing, their ears are tuned to what their parents, grandparents, etc. are saying. They even contemplate and analyse what they hear and then out of the blue they speak out without reflecting, *"Mother, why was Safiyyah khala crying?" "Aunty, why did mom not give you your money back?" "Father, is uncle coming from Islamabad?" "Uncle, tomorrow you are going to the bazaar, I would also like to come."*

Right in the midst of an adult conversation the child will butt in and then what happens? Most of the time he is warned, to *"Keep quiet!" "Don't ask too many questions", "You are speaking too much", "Hey whilst you are playing, your ears are here!" "You mind your own business."*

In my opinion, all these issues, that is, to ask, search, find out the reason, etc. are all part of a child's nature. It is difficult to abstain from this. Even if your father shut you up or your big brother ignores you, your mind will still enquire. Your question will still remain. In fact, another question will now arise, and that is, *"Why was I not given an answer?"*

Beloved children! The fact of the matter is that adults are always angered by your questions. They will only get angry if you butt in on their conversation.

Beloved children! This is not a good habit, in fact, it is contrary to the respect for adults. It is contrary to the etiquette of gatherings. You should indeed continue asking questions, but first look at the occasion. The question will not leave your mind. Wait a bit and after the elders have completed speaking and you see a good chance, then ask with ease.

For example, if your father and uncle are speaking and during their conversation they mention the words *Mazaahir Uloom Saharanpur,* a few times. Now if you do not understand what this means then after they have completed, you should approach your father or uncle and ask nicely, that you heard them mention these words a few times, but you do not know what it means. They will, with pleasure answer your question and explain that *Mazaahir Uloom Saharanpur* is the name of a large Madrasah in the town of Saharanpur in India.

So this is it, children! There are etiquettes in asking questions. Every act has one proper way in which to execute. Whilst there are many incorrect ways, you should abstain therefrom and always endeavour to carry out the correct way.

WHEN THE WOLF SPEAKS

Once a wolf came out to seek food, but found nothing the entire day. After much waiting, he eventually saw a flock of sheep from far off. He now became happy and sat quietly on one side hoping for a stray sheep to pounce upon.
He then saw one lone sheep grazing at a distance from all the others. He grabbed this opportunity and pounced on the sheep, sinking his teeth into it and began to run off, when the shepherd saw him. The shepherd chased after him and eventually caught up with him. He managed to succeed in freeing the sheep from the wolf's jaws.

When the wolf saw his prey running off, he sat up on his hind claws and lifted his fore claws and suddenly began to speak, *"O foolish shepherd! Are you snatching away from me that sustenance which Allaah Ta`ala had destined for me?"*

When the shepherd heard the wolf speaking like a normal human being, he was shocked. *"What's this? You can speak like a human?"*

The wolf replied, *"Should I not demonstrate to you something more astounding?"*
The shepherd was now even more perplexed, *"Please do!"*
The wolf said, *"Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) told the people of Yathrib about the past nations."*

The shepherd took his flock and made off for Madinah Shareef. Before entering Madinah Munawwarah, he left his flock in a safe place and then went off in search of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), to narrate his strange experience.

He eventually located Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and related to him the strange incident of the wolf that spoke in the Arabic language and that also spoke about Nabi's (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) presence in Madinah Shareef.

Upon hearing this incident Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) called an announcer and instructed him to call out to the people that the Salaat time has come.

When all the people had gathered then Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) came out of his room and called to the shepherd to relate to the people his strange incident.

The shepherd narrated his story in full detail. The surprise could be seen on the faces of all those present and all of them asked in one voice, *"Does the wolf actually speak?"*

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) then said, *"This shepherd has spoken the truth."* Then he (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) said, *"I take an oath in the Being in Whose Hands is Muhammad's life! Qiyaamah will not take place until animals speak to men, and the whip ends and shoelaces speak to humans."*

The name of that shepherd was Ahbaan. This incident became famous in Madinah Shareef and the people started calling his children, *Banu Mukallimuz Zi`b* (i.e. the children of the one who spoke to the wolf). They earned their livelihood from cattle and were from the tribe of Khuzaa`a. [Al-Bidaya wan Nihaaya, page 103, vol. 6]

PRECIOUS PEARLS

- For every Ummat there was something or the other by which they were tested. The test for my Ummat is wealth
- That person who does not take advice should know that his heart is void of Imaan
- That person who shows me my faults is most beloved to me
- Sin, in some way or the other agitates the heart
- To agree to everything is a sign of hypocrisy
- From whosoever a good thing is told, listen carefully
- It is also amongst the good acts, not to be evil
- The worst of persons is he who continues sinning with the hope of making taubah, and does not make taubah hoping on a long life
- Speak that of which you have knowledge and refrain from speaking of that which you have no knowledge of.

FULFILLING YOUR FERVOUR IS NOT DEEN

Hadhrat Doctor Abdul Hayy Lucknowi (rahmatullah alayh) always used to say one thing, which is worth remembering. He would always say, *"Brother! Fulfilling your fervour is not Deen. Deen is to follow Allaah Ta`ala and His Rasool (sallallahu alaihi wasallam). One should always reflect as to what the desire and need of Allaah Ta`ala and His Rasool (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) is at any given moment. And then to fulfil that need, is what is called Deen. Deen is not when one feels a desire to do something and then he goes and does it. For example, one person has this urge and desire to always be in the first Saff for Salaat, another has the fervour to go in Jihaad and another has the desire to spend his life in Dawat and Tableegh. Although all these acts are part of the Deen and liable for reward, nevertheless, one should look at the need of the moment. For example, if a man has very ill and ailing parents at home who rely and depend on him for assistance, but he has the fervour to always be in the first Saff for Salaat. His parents cannot fend for themselves. Now the need for this man at this moment is to serve his parents and see to their call. He should rather perform his Salaat at home, than rush to Musjid and neglect his parents (this will naturally apply if there is none other who can come to their assistance). Now if this man leaves his parents alone, where they cannot even move without assistance, and he fulfils his fervour to be in the first Saff for Salaat, then this will not be regarded as following the Deen. It will rather be a matter of him merely fulfilling his own desire."* [Islaah-e-Khutbaat, Hadhrat Mufti Taqi Uthmaani Saheb]

Note:

Beloved friends! In acquiring the Deen and practicing thereupon, one has to consider what the immediate need (injunction) of Allaah Ta`ala is at any given moment. Sometimes there may be a need to carry out two acts at the same time, but one of the two enjoys preference owing to the need of the moment. Carrying out the right act at the right time, warrants Allaah Ta`ala's Pleasure. To merely carry out that act which conforms with one's desire and fervour, will not be correct. You should always remember this point.

THREE MOONS

Hadhrat Aishah (radhiallahu anha) once saw in a dream that three moons fell into her room and broke. She related the dream to her father, Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiallahu anhu), who said nothing about it at first.

After Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) passed away and was buried in the room of Hadhrat Aishah (radhiallahu anha), Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiallahu anhu) said to her, *"This was the first of those three moons, and this is also the best of them all."*

Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiallahu anhu) was next to be buried there in that room next to Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and also Hadhrat Umar (radhiallahu anhu) was buried there. It was as though the dream was now fulfilled and the mystery of the three moons was solved. Together with this it is established that Hadhrat Aishah (radhiallahu anha) was a fourth moon, since the three were buried in her room.

Today we call that blessed place (the room of Hadhrat Aishah - radhiallahu anha) *Raudha-e-Nabawi*.

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had called that place *Riyaadhul Jannat* (Gardens of Paradise).

IMAAM ABU YUSUF (rahmatullah alayh)

العلم لا يعطيك بعضه حتي تعطيه كلك

"Knowledge does not give any part of itself to you, until you give your full self to it."

This is the statement of Hadhrat Yaqub bin Ibrahim Habeebul Ansaari Kufi (rahmatullah alayh), who is famously better known as Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh) or Qaadhi Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh).

He was born in the year 113 A. H. His father passed away whilst he was still young. Ali bin Ju`d says that he used to hear Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) saying, *"My father passed away whilst I was still young and my mother used to send me to the washerman to work, but I would go and sit in the gathering of Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh). My mother would follow me and take me away from Imaam Saheb's gathering and leave me at the washer man.*

I would again go and sit in Imaam Saheb's gathering. This continued for some time, when one day my mother approached Imaam Saheb and complained to him, 'This is an orphan. Besides him I have none to support me and I live off what he earns. You have estranged him."

Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) replied, *"This boy will acquire (great) knowledge. And soon he will be partaking of falooda from plates of Fairooz."*

Listening to this, his mother commented *"You are certainly in dotage."*

Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh) states that after he had become the Qaadhi, he was one day sitting in the company of Haroon Rashid, when they were served Falooda in Fairooz plates. The Khalifa asked him to taste it because it was a dish rarely made by them. Imaam Saheb asked, *"Ameerul Mumineen, what is this?"*

The Khalifah replied, *"This is falooda."* Imaam Saheb says that when he heard this he started smiling. When the Khalifah asked the reason for his smile, he related the entire incident to him.

The Khalifah commented that indeed knowledge benefits in both, this world and the hereafter.

May Allaah Ta`ala have mercy on Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) who saw with the eyes of his heart which the physical eyes could not discern.

Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh) was the most senior of judges in his era. He was even entitled, the Chief Justice Of This World. He was the deputy Khalifah in all those places over which the Khalifah ruled.

Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) used to say that Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh) was the most knowledgeable of all his companions.

Ibn Sama`a (rahmatullah alayh) said, *"After attending to the duty of Justice, Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh) would everyday perform 200 rakaats of Salaat."*

Many great and prominent personalities would come and sit in his gatherings, like Imaam Ahmad bin Hambal (rahmatullah alayh) and Imaam Muhammad bin Hassan (rahmatullah alayh).

The justice of Qaadhi Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh)

Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh) would exercise the greatest level of justice and precaution in executing his duty. He describes this in his own words,

"I have hope in Allaah Ta`ala that after He has deputed me with the duty of being a judge, He will not question me about being oppressive to any party or being biased towards anyone. I have, however fear that He may take me to task regarding one particular incident. A person came to me and claimed that an orchard of his was in the control of Ameerul Mu'mineen Haroon Rashid. I asked Ameerul Mu'mineen regarding this and he replied that the orchard was his and it was sold to him by Khalifah Mahdi. I told the claimant, 'You have heard the reply of Ameerul Mu'mineen, what have you to say?'

He asked Ameerul Mu'mineen to take an oath, and he refused. I told him that I will ask him thrice to take an oath and if he does then, fine otherwise I will have to make a ruling in favour of the claimant.

I asked Ameerul Mu'mineen thrice to take an oath and he refused. I eventually passed the ruling in favour of the claimant. I now fear that Allah Ta`ala will take me to task on this issue and ask me why I had not meted out justice."

Countless people had benefited from Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh) – Muhammad bin Hasan, Ahmed bin Hambal, Bishr bin Waleed, Yahya bin Mu'een, Ali bin Ju'd, Amr bin Abi Amr (rahmatullah alayhim ajma'een).

He passed away in the year 182 AH at the age of 69. Bishr bin Ghawaath (rahmatullah alayh) said that he heard Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh) say, *"I accompanied Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayh) for 17 years and then I was appointed to the mantle of justice for 17 years and now I deem my appointed time is near."*
Bishr (rahmatullah alayh) says that a few months thereafter, Imaam Saheb passed away.

SOMETHING TO BE REALLY HAPPY ABOUT

Hadhrat Umar (radhiallahu anhu) says, *"I was sitting with Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) when he said, 'Tell me who amongst the people of Imaan are the most virtuous?'*

The Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum) replied, 'The Angels.'

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, 'The Angels are worthy of it, who is there to prevent them when Allaah Ta`ala had blessed them with that rank? I am referring to someone else.'

The Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum) said, 'The Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam), whom Allaah Ta`ala had blessed with His Message and with Nubuwwat.'

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, 'they are worthy of it and who can deprive them of it? Allaah Ta`ala has blessed them with this rank and they are deserving of it.'

The Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum) then said, 'The martyrs, who had been martyred with the Ambiyaa (alaihimus salaam) in battle.'

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, 'That right is also theirs. Who is there that can deprive them of that right when Allaah Ta`ala had given them the glad tidings. No, I am referring to someone else.'

The Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum) then asked, 'Tell us then who these people are, O Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)?'

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, 'They are those people who are not yet born. They are those who have not seen me, and yet they bring Imaan in me and without having seen me they testify to my Nubuwwat. They are those who find the Kalaam-e-Paak and they practice upon it. These people are the best and most virtuous amongst the people of Imaan.'"

It is reported in Musnad Ahmad that Abu Umaamah (radhiallahu anhu) said that Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, *"Glad tidings for those people who have seen me and brought Imaan, and glad tidings also for those people who have brought Imaan in me without having seen me."* Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) repeated this thrice.

WHAT INTENTIONS ARE TO BE MADE WHEN PROCEEDING TO THE MUSJID

1. Make the intention of meeting with and visiting Allaah Ta`ala
2. Intention of supplicating to Allaah Ta`ala
3. Intention of meeting with the pious Ahle Haqq Ulama and the Imaam Saheb
4. Intention of waiting for the Jamaat
5. Intention of Itikaaf
6. Intention of making the Thikr of Allaah Ta`ala
7. Intention of making *fikr* (having concern for) the Aakhirah
8. Intention of warning the unwary
9. To enjoin the good is also a work of the Deen
10. Preventing from evil is also worthy of reward
11. Intention of meeting the pious
12. Intention of serving the creation of Allaah Ta`ala or being a means thereof
13. Intention of making the recitation of the Qur`aan Majeed
14. Intention of making salaam and replying to the salaam of those performing Salaat
15. Intention of regarding this Salaat as being one's last Salaat (this is practicing on a Hadith)
16. Intention of seeking and acquiring the Deen
17. Intention of practicing on many Sunnats
18. Having the opportunity of reciting the duas for entering and leaving the Musjid
19. Intention of annihilating pride and acquiring humility
20. Acquiring the companionship of those who come for Salaat and the angels
21. Intention of being saved from sin and being away from the world
22. Intention of acquiring the special mercies and blessings of Allaah Ta`ala
23. Intention of entrance into Jannat, because it is mentioned in a Hadith that the Musjid is a garden of Jannat. Insha-Allaah Ta`ala the person who frequents the Musjid will not be deprived of entrance to Jannat.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Columbus was unaware right until his death that he had discovered America

Whether you believe it or not, but it is a fact that Christopher Columbus, right until his death, was not aware that he was not in India but in some new land - America. He was under the impression that he was in India but he was blissfully unaware that he was in the country of what we know today as America.

After the death of Hamaayo, for 17 days, a look-alike was placed on his throne and people never realised it

Whether you believe it or not, but it is a fact that the famous Moghul king, Naseerud Deen Hamaayo's death was kept secret for 17 days, for fear of a rebellion, by placing a look-alike at his throne.

Whether you believe it or not, but the blood in our bodies travels a distance of 168 miles (about 270 kilometres) in one day

Do you know how much the blood travels in our bodies in one day?
The scientists have calculated various distances, and the result was that the blood travels about 168 miles in a body during one day.

The largest gravesite for dogs

The largest graveyard for dogs can be found in Paris.

He beat Allamah Iqbal in a poetry-recitation contest of the poems of Allamah Iqbal

A certain person knew the poems of Allamah Iqbal so fluently and well, that once he beat Allamah Iqbal himself in a poetry recitation contest of Allamah Iqbal's poems.

A falcon carries a little girl away

On the 6th June 1933, a little girl was playing outside her home, when a falcon could be seen circling above her. All of a sudden it descended and clawed the girl and carried her away. The falcon carried her more than a kilometre away to its nest at the end of the forest. The people joined the little girl's parents in search for her and could not locate her. They searched for seven hours and eventually traced her to the nest. When they got there the little girl was sound asleep and blissfully unaware of what was happening around her.

He was struck by lighting six times, but survived each time

An American man was struck by lighting six times in his life and he survived each time. In 1942 he was struck by lighting and lost his toenail. In 1969 he was struck again by lighting and this time he lost his eyebrows, in 1970 his left shoulder was badly injured in 1972 his hair on his head was burnt, in 1973 the hair on his head was burnt again and in June 1976 his ankles were badly wounded.

IMAAM BUKHAARI (rahmatullah alayh)

"O Ustaad of all the Ustaads and leader of all Muhadditheen! Grant me permission to have the honour of kissing your feet."

This was the sentiments of Imaam Muslim (rahmatullah alayh) for that personality whose full name was Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail bin Ibrahim Al-Jo`fi Al-Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh). However he was famously known as Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh).

Who is there that does not know of Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh)? He was known as Ameerul Mu`mineen in Hadith. Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh) was born on 13th Shawwaal 194 A.H. in Bukhaara. His father died when he was still young and his mother was left with attending to his upbringing an education. When he was still young he became blind, which left his mother helpless and she supplicated in earnest to Allaah Ta`ala. One night she saw Hadhrat Ibrahim (alaihis salaam) in a dream, who told her, *"Allaah Ta`ala has blessed your son with sight owing to*

your crying and supplicating unto Him." When she awoke in the morning, she found that her son could see.

By the age of 16, Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh) had already memorised a treasure of Ahaadith. Whilst in his youth he had already memorised 70 000 Ahaadith. Take note of the following incident:

Once Imaam Daakhili (rahmatullah alayh) was dictating Ahaadith, when he said, *"It has been reported from Sufyaan from Abu Zubair from Ibrahim…"*

Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh) who was sitting in one corner immediately said, *"Abu Zubair had never reported (Ahaadith) from Ibrahim."* Imaam Daakhili (rahmatullah alayh) did not take heed to this, because he regarded Imaam Saheb as being still young then.

Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh) said, *"Refer to the original narration."* Daakhili (rahmatullah alayh) then went home and checked on his references. He found Imaam Saheb to be correct in his claim and he returned and verified Imaam Saheb's claims.

Imaam Saheb said, *"The correct chain is: Sufyaan from Zubair bin Adi from Ibrahim."* When Imaam Daakhili (rahmatullah alayh) heard this, he was astounded and verified it. Someone asked Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh) what his age was at that time and he replied that he was 11 years of age. [Taarikh Baghdaad, vol. 2, page 7]

The Shuyookh of Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh) was approximately 1080.

Qutaibah bin Saeed (rahmatullah alayh) said that he had stayed in the company of Fuqahaa, Ulama and Sufiyaa, but he had never seen anyone the like of Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh). He says that the rank of Imaam Saheb during his era was like the status of Hadhrat Umar (radhiallahu anhu) amongst the Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum).

Someone once came to Hadhrat Qutaibah (rahmatullah alayh) to ask a question and Imaam Saheb was also there. Hadhrat Qutaibah (rahmatullah alayh) indicated towards Imaam Saheb and told the person that he was the combination of Ahmad bin Hambal, Ishaq bin Rahawiya and Ali bin Madeeni (rahmatullah alayhim). Allaah Ta`ala has sent him for you, therefore whatever you need to ask, ask of him.

Allamah Bakandi (rahmatullah alayh) who was amongst the Ustaads of Imaam Saheb said that whenever Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh) came to sit in his gathering then he would tremble.

Abu Amar Khaffaaf (rahmatullah alayh) said, *"In the field of Hadith, Muhammad bin Ismail surpasses Ishaq bin Rahawiya and Ahmad bin Hambal (rahmatullah alayhim), etc. If anyone says anything against Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh), then from me he earned 1000 curses."*

Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh) had compiled many kitaabs, which were all great in their own right. However, the level to which Saheeh Bukhaari had gained fame, acceptance and excellence, none of his other works can compare, in fact no other compilation of any other person can compare.

This compilation was known as *the Most Authentic Book after the Kitaabullaah*. And why should not this work of his gain this title, when it was his habit to first take a bath, perform two Rakaats of Istikhaara Salaat and then to note down each Hadith which made up this great Kitaab?

There are approximately 10 000 Ahaadith in Bukhaari Shareef. So from this we can gauge that in compiling this Kitaab he had performed at least 10 000 times ghusal and 20 000 Rakaats of Salaat! This one point should demonstrate to us the magnanimity of this great personality.

Imaam Bukhaari's (rahmatullah alayh) stage of Imtihaan (trial)

As it is the norm with Allaah Ta`ala, that all the Sulahaa and pious personalities have to undergo some trial, and as Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has mentioned, *"This world is a prison for the believers and a heaven for the kaafir"*, Imaam Bukhaari (rahmatullah alayh) also had to undergo two great trials in his life.

His first trial was in Naishapur when some people accused Imaam Saheb of claiming that the words of the Qur`aan Majeed are *Makhlooq* (creation), whereas this claim is not incorrect. It is clear that our uttered words are a creation. The masses could not understand this and they drove Imaam Saheb out of Naishapur. He left Naishapur and went to his birthplace, Bukhaara, where the people welcomed him.

His second trial came in Bukhaara itself, which resulted in his being exiled. Many reasons were cited for this, but the most accepted view was that the Ameer of Bukhaara, Khaalid bin Ahmad, called Imaam Saheb to his palace so that people may benefit from his compilation, or that he made this request, that Imaam Saheb come to his palace to teach his sons.

Imaam Saheb declined this offer of the Ameer saying that this was an insult to Ilm, and that if anyone wanted to benefit from the Ahaadith, then he needs to come to the gatherings of Imaam Saheb and seek that knowledge. The Ameer was upset at this attitude of Imaam Saheb and instructed that he leave Bukhaara.

From there, Imaam Saheb went to a village in Samarqand, called Khartang, and met with some associates. After having experienced the constrained circumstances which were levelled against him by man, he had the great desire to meet with his Creator. One night, after having performed Salaat, this dua was heard from him, *"O Allaah, indeed this world has become constrained upon me, notwithstanding its vastness, take me towards You."*

Not even a month thereafter, he passed away. He passed away at almost Esha time.

On the first Shawwal 256 A.H, the day of Eid, after Zuhr Salaat, his Janaazah took place. He passed away at the age of 62. This was a great loss of one of mankind's greatest benefactor. *May Allaah Ta`ala shower His mercy on him, be pleased with him and make Jannat his final abode.*

Abdul Waahid bin Adam At-Tooraawisi (rahmatullah alayh) said, *"I saw Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in a dream. He was standing in the midst of a group of Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum). After making salaam, I asked, 'O Rasool of Allaah Ta`ala! Why are you all standing here?' Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) replied, 'We are awaiting the arrival of Muhammad bin Ismail.' After a few days the news of Imaam Saheb's demise reached me. It transpired that he had passed away at the precise moment I had witnessed the dream."*

BEYOND SPACE

What lies beyond space? No scientist knows whether space has any limits or whether it is limitless. They have not yet discovered this. How huge is the universe? The scientists have merely estimated this, but not one of them, to date, has come up with any definite answer. Not only this, but there are

countless other questions to which they have no answer. They also rely on estimates regarding time, speed, volume, etc. They do not know the end limits of any of these.

Take an example of time. If a rocket has to leave this earth, land on some planet and if it has to spend a day or 1½ days on that planet and then return to earth, this would mean thousands of years may have passed on earth.

This means that for the people on the rocket only one day has passed, whereas on earth 100 years may have passed. But this will happen when man leaves this galaxy to enter another galaxy. Between each galaxy there is space and in space there is no air or atmosphere, therefore when a rocket leaves its own galaxy it is not any more bound by the time constraints of that galaxy.

You may be surprised to hear all this. There are many Ahaadith which dilate on this subject and adds light to these mysteries. It is stated in one Hadith where Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, *"Qiyaamah will not dawn until time will become very constrained…"* Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) further explained that a year will pass so quickly that it would appear as only a month and a month will appear as a week and a week as a day and a day as an hour and an hour will appear as a flicker of light. [Mishkaat, page 470, vol.2]

This Hadith invites you to ponder and reflect. Does not time seem to be passing very, very fast? Does not the years virtually 'fly' past? Does not the days and hours appear very short. It is apparent that our era is not far off from Qiyaamah.

FIQHI QUESTIONS

1. Which pure water is there with which wudhu is not allowed?
2. Which ghusal is there that only has one Fardh?
3. Which Salaat is there whose performance on its time is sinful?
4. Which Salaat is there which does not warrant a Qadha if it becomes faasid?
5. Who is that person upon whom it is Waajib to perform Salaat without headgear?

THE ETIQUETTES OF USING THE TELEPHONE

Technological advances are being made daily. One such instrument is the telephone, which has become such that there is no one who can claim that he is independent of its use and benefits.

Digital technology has advanced a great deal since the first invention in this regard by Alexander Graham Bell. The telephone has practically become an integral part of our lives today. It has become practically a necessity in our lives. We have now the cell phones, internet, calculators, etc., etc, which we use daily in our everyday lives. All these apparatuses simplify our lives and tasks.

Since the telephone is so widely used nowadays, it is only appropriate that we apply some etiquette regarding it.

1. You should keep the mouthpiece close to your lips. At least an inch distance.
2. Keep your voice clear and soft. Do not be too loud or harsh when speaking on the phone, since it causes discomfort to the listener.
3. Do not be too forceful and breath heavily when speaking on the phone.
4. Remain cool and calm when speaking on the phone. Think and choose your words carefully and speak in clear sentences.
5. Refrain from confusing and complex sentences.

6. Do not adhere to the common practice of saying '*hello*', you should rather say *Assalaamualaikum*.
7. Do not confuse the caller as to who you are. Do not beat around the bush and keep them guessing. This is frustrating for the caller and a waste of time, both for you and the caller.
8. Do not eat, chew or drink whilst speaking on the phone. This is highly unbecoming.
9. After the usual greeting, get to the point and be explicit.
10. When a phone rings, then do not hasten to pick it up. Let it ring for at least two rings.

A point to remember is that speaking on the telephone is as important as meeting a person face to face, hence it is important to adhere to the proper etiquette.

SUSTENANCE

It is also one of the important teachings of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) that we should value and appreciate the sustenance from Allaah Ta'ala. It should be respected and not disrespected. This Islamic etiquette is sorely lacking in our dealings nowadays. We have started to imitate the non-Muslims in almost every action of ours, and we do not respect the sustenance bestowed on us by Allaah Ta'ala. If we have leftover food then we throw it away. Many a times one's heart pains at seeing such things. This is happening in every Muslim home. This happens particularly when there is a function and people eat in large venues, large quantities of leftover food is merely dumped, whereas Islam teaches us to value and honour even that small piece of bread which falls on the ground. That small piece should be picked up and placed on a table etc. with respect.

Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) and appreciation of sustenance

Hadhrat Doctor Abdul Hayy (rahmatullah alayh) narrates the following incident regarding Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh). Once Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) fell ill and someone brought milk for him to drink. He drank the milk but there was a little left over, which he placed at his bedside and he dozed off. Upon awakening he asked the person sitting by him where that little leftover milk was. The person told him that the milk was thrown away. Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) became extremely displeased and said, *"Have you thrown the blessings of Allaah Ta`ala away? You have committed a grave error. If I could not drink the milk finish, then you should have drank it or given it to someone else to drink or given it to a cat or bird etc. It could have benefited some creation of Allaah Ta'ala, so why did you throw it away?"*
He then explained one Usool (principle of the Shariah), *"That thing which a person benefits from during his lifetime in a large quantity, it becomes Waajib on him to appreciate and respect every little quantity thereof."*

For example, if a person consumes or has large quantities of food whereby his hunger is satisfied and he is able to fulfil his needs therewith, but if a little bit of that food remains then it is Waajib for him to respect, honour and appreciate that little bit as well. It is not permissible for him to discard it. This principle is in reality gleaned from the following Hadith, *"Do not be unappreciative of the sustenance given by Allaah Ta'ala. You should bring it to use in some way or the other."*

The proper method of shaking out the *dastarkhaan*

There was an Ustaadh in the Daarul Uloom Deoband of Mufti Shafi Saheb (rahmatullah alayh), whose name was Hadhrat Maulana Sayyed Asghar Hussein Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) who was known to all as Hadhrat Mia Saheb. He was a great and remarkable buzrug. When one would listen to his talks, then it would transport one to the era of the Sahaabah (radhiallahu anhum). Mufti Shafi Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) says that once he went into his presence. He said that it was meal time so Mufti Saheb should join him for a meal. Mufti Saheb sat down with him for the meal. After the

meal Mufti Saheb was folding the dastarkhaan, to go and shake it out, when Hadhrat Mia Saheb caught hold of his hand and said, *"What are you doing?"* Mufti Saheb replied that he was going to shake the Dastarkhaan out. Hadhrat Mia Saheb asked, *"Do you know how to shake the dastarkhaan out?"* Mufti Saheb replied, *"Hadhrat, what expertise is there in shaking out a dastarkhaan, that one has to learn? It merely has to be taken outside and shaken out."*

Hadhrat Mia Saheb explains, *"I asked you whether you know how to shake out a dastarkhaan or not. It is clear that you do not know the proper procedure when shaking out a dastarkhaan."* Mufti Saheb, said, *"Please teach me, then."* Hadhrat Mia Saheb said, *"Yes there is an art in shaking it out."*

He then proceeded to open the dastarkhaan again and he separated the pieces of meat to one side. He put the bones which had a little bit of meat thereon on one side, he put the small pieces of bread on one side, he placed the small crumbs of bread on one side, and then he told Mufti Saheb, *"Look now! Here are four things and I have separated each one of them to one side. These pieces of meat which I placed on this side are for the cat which knows that after each meal it will find these pieces here for it to eat. The bones which I placed on that corner are for the dogs in the neighbourhood that know they will find them there. The pieces of bread which I placed on the wall are for the birds that know they will find them there and the crumbs of bread which I placed on the ground are the share of the ants.*

All this is sustenance from Allah Ta'ala, and none of it should be wasted."

Hadhrat (rahmatullah alayh) used to say that since that day we realised that to shake out the dastarkhaan is also an art, which we need to teach to others.

Our condition today

Our condition today is such that we go and shake the dastarkhaan out in the rubbish bin. We give scant regard for the blessings which Allaah Ta`ala has bestowed upon us.

All these are the creation of Allaah Ta`ala, for whom He has created sustenance. If you cannot eat it yourself then leave it for some other creation. In previous times the children were taught that all this is the sustenance from Allaah Ta`ala. They were taught to respect every little bit and if they were to see a small piece of bread etc. on the ground, they would pick it up with respect, kiss it and put on a high place. But as the western society had wrought its effects on us, we see that the Islamic etiquette has slowly seeped out of our lives. Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has taught us that if you like some food, then eat it and if you do not like it then at least do not find fault in it (and criticise it). We should not be unappreciative and disrespectful to food.

There is a need for us to reawaken that Sunnat.

All this is not merely about story-telling and pastimes, rather we should bring these things into our lives and respect the sustenance given to us by Allaah Ta'ala and we should also practice on what Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) taught us in this regard. May Allaah Ta`ala grant us all the good guidance to practice on this.

THE ACTION MAY BE SMALL BUT THE REWARD IS BIG

If we carry out every action of ours in accordance to the Sunnat of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then we will actually discern the noor of the Sunnat spreading through our homes. Everyone will clearly see the effects of this blessing.

All this is not merely to read (and forget). We should strive to remember all of it and bring every bit into practice and then we will quickly see the changes in our lives.

- When emerging from the home, then recite the dua:

بسم الله توكلت علي الله لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله

"I begin in the Name of Allaah Ta`ala and have trust on Him. I have no power (to save myself from evil) nor strength (to do good) except with (the help of) Allaah Ta`ala."

- As soon as the Athaan is called out, reply to its words
- Upon completion of the Athaan, recite Durood Shareef and the dua
- The time between the Athaan and Takbeer is a time when duas are readily accepted by Allaah Ta`ala
- The reward for the two Sunnat Rakaats of Fajr is better than this entire world and whatever it contains
- Wherever possible, always try to sit in the first saff. Preferably directly behind the Imaam, or at least on his right side. If not, then in the first saff on the left of the Imaam. If there is place in the first saff, then do not sit in the second saff, because the reward for sitting in the first saff is tremendous
- As long as a person sits and waits for a Salaat, he acquires the reward as though he is actually performing that Salaat. However whilst sitting he should remain engaged in Thikr. If he speaks worldly things, then his reward will be diminished. When you make thikr then you will be liable for more reward.

PETROL FIRE

Question: Why does water not extinguish a petrol fire?

Answer: Petrol is acquired after mined (crude) oil, obtained from the earth, is refined. Besides petrol, other minerals are also manufactured from mined oil, like diesel, gasoline, paraffin, etc. The molecular structure of oil is similar to that of a chain. Since the density of petrol is less than that of water, therefore, when water is mixed with petrol, it always goes to the bottom and the petrol remains on top. Similarly, when petrol is mixed with water, the petrol forms a layer and remain on the surface of the water. Petrol burns faster because of the oxygen which is in the air. If the petrol is of a small quantity and it catches alight, then if water is continuously poured on it, and it cannot get sufficient oxygen the fire may extinguish. However if the fire is widespread, then the water will become steam and dissolve, and the fire will not be extinguished.

THE COLOUR OF THE SKY

Can you tell what the colour of the sky is?
You will immediately reply that it is blue.
No, this is incorrect. The colour of the sky is black. The reason for this is that the rays of the sun, which we see as white, are actually made up of the seven rainbow colours. There is a specific order in this.

On the one side is red and on the other side is violet. There are always tiny particles of dust which float in the atmosphere and when the rays of the sun enter the atmosphere, they reflect off these particles. The result of this reflection is that the blue and violet colours are 'bent' upon this reflection and the sky appears blue.
At the time of sunrise and sunset, the sky appears red to us. The reason for this is that the remaining rays of the sun are at those times weak and only the red and orange colours of the sun's rays reach the earth, and this gives the reddish colour to the horizon which we see.

IT IS STRANGE

This earth is very wide.

- The very first surprise the angels received was when Allaah Ta`ala had created Hadhrat Aadam (alaihis salaam)
- The world was also surprised when Allaah Ta`ala made the arrangements for the sustenance of Hadhrat Maryam (alaihaa salaam)
- And then when Hadhrat Isaa (alaihis salaam) was born without a father, the world was astounded
- The body of Firoun was preserved. The people of the world were astonished when they saw it
- Imaam Maalik (rahmatullah alayh) remained in his mother's womb for more than three years. However, when a person by the name of Muhammad bin Ajlaan was born, then he was already four years old, and the hair on his head had already fully grown and his teeth were out.

In essence, the wonders and strange things of this world are countless. All of these testify to the existence and Oneness of Allaah Ta`ala.

SACRED AND HOLY PLACES

Questions:

1. Who had designed the Kaabah Shareef?
2. How many Musaajid were there in Madinah Shareef at the time of Nabi's (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) demise?
3. Who was the first Sahaabi (radhiallahu anhu) who lit the first lamp in Musjid-e-Nabawi?
4. What is the present name of Hudaibia?
5. Whilst building the Kaabah, from which five mountains did Hadhrat Ibrahim (alaihis salaam) use stones?
6. What was the area of Musjid-e-Nabawi during the time of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)?
7. The first Musjid in Barsagheer was built after the coming of Muhammad bin Qaasim (rahmatullah alayh) in 727 A.H. Can you tell which Musjid this is that has 33 pillars?
8. Who was the first to make Imaamat in the Baadshaahi Musjid (Lahore)?
9. Who built the Jami Musjid in Damascus, which some people regard as the fourth wonder?
10. Can you identify the Sahaabi (radhiallahu anhu) whose mother was the first Arab lady to have clothed the Kaabah Shareef in the ghilaaf?
11. Who was the first person to have fully donned the ghilaaf on the Kaabah Shareef?
12. On which side of the Kaabah is the Hajre-Aswad?
13. During whose reign was the Musjid-e-Nabawi first embellished with designs?
14. How many chandeliers, large and small, are there on the roof of the Kaabah Shareef?
15. Who had rebuilt the Musjid Quba in 555A. H.?
16. Who was the first to build a proper door for the Kaabah Shareef?
17. Through which door do the Haaji's normally enter the Kaabah Shareef?
18. Who was the first trustee of the Kaabah Shareef from amongst the Quraish?
19. What is the colour of the building of the Kaabah Shareef?
20. Which Sahaabi (radhiallahu anhu) was the first to place silver around the Hajr-e-Aswad?

THE VIRTUE OF THIKR ON A JOURNEY

That person , who whilst travelling alone remembers Allaah Ta`ala and makes His Thikr, then Allaah Ta`ala appoints a special angel to accompany him, and that person who occupies himself with poetry and other futilities, a jinn is appointed to accompany him. [Hisne Haseen, page 288]

There is a Hadith in Musnad Ahmed where Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the person who recites thrice, *Allaahu Akbar, Alhamdulillah, Subhaanallah, Laailaahaillallah*, then Allaah Ta`ala directs His special mercy towards that person and He becomes pleased with that person. [Hisne Haseen, page 280]

It is stated in Hisne Haseen that when a person sits in a conveyance then he should recite *Allaahu Akbar* thrice and recite the following dua:

سبحان الذي سخّر لنا هذا و ما كنّا له مقرنين و انّا الي ربّنا لمنقلبون

"Pure is that Being who has made subservient to us this (conveyance) and not made us subservient to it. And indeed we are to return to our Rabb."

When ascending you should read *Allaahu Akbar* and when descending recite *Subhaanallah*. When you reach any open ground then recite *Laailaahaillallahu* and *Allaahu Akbar*. If anything happens to the conveyance then immediately recite *Bismillah* and *Astaghfirullah*.

VALUABLE ADVICES OF IMAAM-E-AAZAM, IMAAM ABU HANIFAH (rahmatullah alayh)

Friends! We will now relate some advices of Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) which he had given to his beloved son, Hadhrat Hammaad (rahmatullah alayh).

Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) said, *"O my beloved son! May Allaah Ta`ala keep your feet firm on guidance and be of assistance to you. I will give you some advices which, if you remember them and bring them into practice then I am hopeful that you will attain success in both, this world and the Hereafter:*

1. *Adopt Taqwa, i.e. fear Allaah Ta'ala, safeguard your limbs from sin and carry out His injunctions. In this manner bring alive the Ibaadat of Allaah Ta`ala.*
2. *Those things which are necessary for you to know, never remain ignorant of them.*
3. *Never associate with anyone except to fulfil a worldly or Deeni need.*
4. *Pay special attention to fulfilling the rights of others and never ask for your rights to be fulfilled except in dire need.*
5. *Don't harbour enmity, neither for a Muslim or non-Muslim.*
6. *Be satisfied and contented with the wealth and status which Allaah Ta`ala had bestowed on you.*
7. *In order to be independent of others you should fulfil your own tasks with proper means and good planning.*
8. *Don't make yourself the object of others' gaze.*
9. *Don't involve yourself in frivolity and futility.*
10. *When meeting others, be the first to make Salaam. Speak good things and associate with only the good and refrain from the evil.*
11. *Engage in excessive Thikr of Allaah Ta`ala and Durood Shareef.*
12. *Always recite Sayyidul Astaghfaar in the same words as reported by Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).*

اللهم انت ربي لا اله الا انت خلقتني و انا عبدك و انا علي عهدك و وعدك ما استطعت اعوذ بك من شر ما صنعت ابوء لك بنعمتك علي و ابوء بذنبي فاغفرلي فانه لا يغفر الذنوب الا انت

He who recites it during the evening and passes away during the night he will attain Jannat and if he recites it in the morning and passes away during the day then too he will attain Jannat.

Someone once came to Hadhrat Abu Darda (radhiallahu anhu) and told him that his house was on fire, to which he replied, 'It will not burn, because I have heard the following dua from Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and he (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) said that whoever recites it in the morning then he will be saved from calamities until the evening and whosoever recites it in the evening will be saved until the morning.' This dua is:

PUT ARABIC

13. *Recite Qur`aan Majeed in abundance and convey the reward onto Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), your parents, teachers and all Muslims*
14. *Be more wary of your associates than you are of your enemies, because these are trying times, and it is our friends who become our enemies.*
15. *Keep you secrets, capital, plans and travels hidden.*
16. *Keep good relation with your neighbours and maintain patience on whatever harm they may cause you*
17. *Remain on the Path of the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat and save yourself from the way of the ignorant ones.*
18. *Keep a clean and sincere intention in all your works and always earn only a Halaal sustenance*
19. *Practice on the following five Ahaadith which I have extracted from 500 000:*
    a. *A goodness of one's Islaam is that he abandons futile things*
    b. *None of you can be a perfect Muslim until he loves for his Muslim brother what he loves for himself*
    c. *Halaal is clear and Haraam is clear and whatever is in between these two is doubtful, of which many people are unaware. He who saves himself from doubtful things has safeguarded his Deen and chastity and he who indulges in doubtful will soon indulge in Haraam, just like that sheep which grazes on the border. Soon it will trespass and eat from the other pasture. Beware! Every king has his restrictions and the restrictions of Allaah Ta`ala are those things He has made Haraam. Know! There is a piece of flesh in every man which, if it is protected then the entire body will be protected and if it is spoilt then the entire body will be spoilt. Know! That flesh is the heart.*
    d. *A true Muslim is he from whose hand and tongue others are safe*
    e. *You should suspend your good times (youth) between hope and fear. When death nears, then you should have hope in Allaah Ta`ala and die hoping on His mercy, because indeed He is Most Forgiving and Merciful.*

ARE YOU AWARE?

Today we will explain to you how Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) used to enter the home. What was Nabi's (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) blessed habit when going to someone else's home? How did he greet others? Do you know all this? Do you practice this? Before we explain all this to you, you should give it some thought.

Hadhrat Abu Umaamah Baahili (rahmatullah alayh) reports that Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, *"Three person are such that Allaah Ta`ala oversees them. Allaah Ta`ala is sufficient for them in their lives and their abode in the hereafter will be Jannat. They are:*

1. *That person who enters his home making salaam. Allaah Ta`ala is his surety.*

2. *He who goes towards the Musjid (to perform Salaat), is in the protection of Allaah Ta`ala.*
3. *He who emerges to participate in Jihaad, is under Allaah Ta`ala's security."* [Ibn Majah, page 252, vol. 2]

When Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would enter his home at night, then he would make salaam in such a way that if anyone was sleeping, they would not be disturbed and if anyone was awake, they would hear him. [Tirmidhi Shareef, page 101, vol. 2]

Whenever Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would go to meet someone, then his blessed habit was to call out salaam thrice in seeking permission to enter. If there was no reply, then he would leave. [Majma`uz Zawaa`id, page 34, vol. 8]

When Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would seek permission to enter, then he would not stand directly in the doorway. He would stand slightly to the left or right of the door, make salaam and then seek consent to enter, lest his gaze not fall into the home, before seeking permission to enter. [Mishkaat, page 401, vol. 2]

It has been reported from Hadhrat A`taa bin Yasaar (radhiallahu anhu) that a person once asked Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) if he should first seek permission to enter his own home, if his mother was in. Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) replied, *"Yes!"*

The man then told Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) that he lives with his mother in the same house and not that they live in separate homes.

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, *"Then too you should seek permission."*

The man then asked, *'O Rasool of Allaah Ta`ala! In order to serve my mother I need to go in and out of the house a few times."*

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, *"You should take permission and enter. Would you like that you may find your mother in a state of undress?"*

Immediately the man replied, *"No, most certainly not!"*
Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) then said, *"Then you should first get permission."* [Mishkaat, page 401, vol.2]

It is also amongst the etiquettes to make salaam before seeking permission to enter. You should give your full name and not say *"It is me."*

This then is the etiquette of entering the house.

THE CAMEL

Today we are going to introduce you to a crooked animal. Its connection with man dates back to the beginning. However, you may not be aware of some interesting facts regarding the camel.

The Persian word for camel is *Shutarr* and the Arabic word is *Jamal*. It is also called *Ibil* in Arabic. It is a famous animal and called the ship of the desert. In the desert it can travel very fast, whereas animals such as the horse will be left behind. It comes in great use to carry heavy loads. After the elephant, this is a very large animal. Zakaat is Waajib if one has five camels, that is, for every five camels that one owns, one sheep/goat has to be given in Zakaat, which must not be less than a year old.

The meat of the camel is blue-red and brownish, firm, hot and dry. It digests slowly. The body of the camel does not have a gall-bladder. It has a skin which resembles a gall-bladder situated on the liver.

The camel likes to eat of thorny trees, which it digests quickly. It can remain thirsty for up to ten days. It eats all types of fodder. It is an animal with great malice. If anyone irritates and troubles it, then it has a tendency to remember him and when it gets an opportunity, it will extract revenge. It will chew his face or shoulder.

Once a camel looked towards Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and started crying. Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) passed his hand over it and it stopped crying. Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) then asked who the camel belonged to and an Ansari said that it was his. Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) told him, *"Don't you have any fear of Allaah Ta`ala? This camel is complaining that you leave him hungry and thirsty."*

There is another such incident. Once a camel strutted towards Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and started speaking, *"My master has taken service from me for my entire life. Now I have become old and he wishes to slaughter me."*

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) took the camel to its owner and said, *"This camel of yours has complained to me. Do you not have the fear of Allaah Ta`ala?"*

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) then purchased the camel and left it in an enclosure. [Al-Bidaaya wan Nihaaya, page 101, vol. 6]

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

The fish that can fly up to ½ a mile

Whether you believe it or not, but the Glidefish can fly for up to ½ a mile (805 metres), at a speed of 30 miles an hour (about 48 km/h).

The elephant that stopped a railway engine whilst walking

Once in India, an elephant stopped a moving railway engine.

A flying snake

Whether you believe it or not, but it is a fact that in Java (Indonesia) there exists a snake that flies.

Only male spiders can spin webs

You may think that the spider-web is made by the female spider, or that both the male and female spin webs. However the fact is that only the male spider spins webs.

A cricket does not make noise from its mouth, but…

You may think that a cricket makes it noises from its mouth, whereas it is not so. the fact is that the cricket rubs its front legs against its wings which creates the sound.

Light is only given off by the female firefly

You may think that all fireflies give off light, that is, both male and female. But the fact of the matter is that only the female firefly gives off light.

The flower which is inside the fruit

Does a wild fig have a flower? If so, then where is it? It is very interesting that you will never find the flower of the wild fig anywhere in the tree. The reason being that the flower is in the fruit.

The ocean plant that changes its bright colour

There is strange and unique plant in the ocean which has a rose colour the entire day until half the night has passed. Thereafter it exudes a yellowish colour which spreads light and illuminates its surroundings.

Sea fish, which straighten up like towers in the water collides with ships and sinks them

Have you ever heard of the Minaarah Fish? These are extremely dangerous fish. They live in the ocean and can straighten themselves like towers and collide themselves with ships, thereby causing the ships to sink.

The only bird in the world that lives in caves

There are many types of animals that live in caves. But if you were ever asked which is the only bird that lives in a cave, you may be dumbfounded. Your mind might lead you to answer – the bat! But in reality the bat is not classified as a bird. It is a mammal. The ‘Gochaar’ is the only bird in the world that lives in a cave.

The tree that bears fruit for 300 years

The pear tree can bear fruit for up to 300 years. There is no other tree on earth that can bear fruit for such a long period of time.

An animal which lays eggs and then also gives milk to its offspring

The ‘Monotreme’ is an animal that lays eggs and it also feeds milk to its offspring. This type of animal is chiefly found in Australia and Tasmania.

Sea horses swim perpendicularly

A strange phenomenon of the sea horses is that they swim perpendicularly (upright).

The bird whose skin is used for leather

If anyone has to ask you to name the bird whose skin is used to make leather, then you will probably be dumbfounded. However the fact of the matter is that the skin of the ostrich is used to make leather.

Only the male cockroach flies

You may labour under the impression that both the male and female cockroaches, which appear the same, can fly. But the fact of the matter is that only the male can fly.

The lizard that hunts bucks and bears

The largest lizard in the world, which spans about 3.5 metres in length, can be found in Indonesia. It can weigh up to 135 kg. It runs and travels on the ground and the most strange thing about it is that it hunts fast running animals such as the bucks and bears.

The weird ostrich

The ostrich may lay 20 to 30 eggs at a time, which it separates into three parts. The one third it buries under the ground, the second third it leaves in the sun and the last third it hatches. When the young hatch, it breaks the eggs which were left in the sun and feeds them therewith. When these are finished, then it removes the eggs from the ground and makes holes in them. When ants and other insects gather to consume the contents of the eggs, the ostrich catches them and feeds them to the young.

Scorpion

When a scorpion stings a snake, then it only stings it on the head, because if it stings the snake anywhere else, the snake will eat the scorpion. It is as though Allaah Ta`ala had taught the scorpion to sting the snakes in its head.

Spider

When the spider spins its web, then it leaves a few threads hanging above the web, whereupon it attaches itself. When a fly etc. gets entangled in the web, then the spider comes down and hunts it. If it is very hungry, then it merely coils itself on the ground and lays unnoticeable. When a fly etc. comes close, then it pounces on it and catches it. A spider can sometimes leap up to a foot's distance.

The horned frog, whose bite can kill a horse

In Brazil there are such frogs that have little horns above their eyes, and they bark like dogs. If it bites a horse, then the horse can die.

Only the male frog croaks

If there are many frogs croaking, then can you tell how many amongst them are males and how many female? The answer to this is simple…as many frogs that are croaking, they are all male, because female frogs do not croak.

A fish from whose body green rays exude

The Spring Dog Fish is such a fish that exudes light. Green rays of light come out from the body of these fish.

Animals that sleep the entire winter through

There are such animals in this world that sleep throughout the winter months. For example, in some countries, the bat sleep through the winter, in other countries the frog and in America the tortoise, etc.

The fly, whose bite can kill cattle,

In Nigeria there are such flies in their jungles, whose bite can kill cattle.

Animals that wash before partaking of their food

You may find this surprising but there are a certain species of animals that wash before they eat.

The fruits whose seed in above the skin

Generally the seed of a fruit lies beneath its skin, but the strawberry is such a fruit whose seed is found above its skin.

The wolf whose tail changes colour

There is a type of wolf found in western America whose tail changes colour. In the summer its tail is a bright brown and in winter is changes to grey/ash-colour.

A dog cannot see red and green colours

It is a fact that dogs cannot make out or distinguish the colours red and green.

A LITTLE REGARDING THE KAABATULLAAH

- The stone upon which Hadhrat Ibrahim (alaihis salaam) stood when building the Kaabah is called Maqaame Ibrahim.
- Qassi bin Kilaab has rebuilt the Kaabah for the 7th time
- The Quraish had rebuilt it the 8th time
- Hajjaaj bin Yusuf had closed the western door of the Kaabah Shareef
- The Haajis generally enter the Kaabah Shareef through Baabus Salaam
- The Tawaaf of the Kaabah is begun at the Hajre-Aswad, where it is kissed.
- There are 80 chandeliers in the Kaabah Shareef
- Asad Hameeri was the first to construct a door on the Kaabah Shareef.

THE SPECIALITY OF THE 'IBRAHIM' CONSTRUCTION

- He had constructed the Kaabah Shareef upon the structure of Hadhrat Aadam (alaihis salaam)
- He had mounted the rocks on top on another and did not use any type of cement, lime, etc.
- He had constructed it in a rectangular form
- His structure had four corners, *Rukn-e-Hajre Aswad, Rukne Iraqi, Rukne Shaami* and *RukneYamaani*. *Istilaam* was to be made on all four corners.
- There was one opening on the eastern side, which had no door or anything to close.
- The opening was on the ground and not lifted higher
- The portion of the *Hateem* was incorporated in the Kaabah
- There was no roof on the Kaabah Shareef
- The Kaabah Shareef had no *ghilaaf*. The first *ghilaaf* was placed by Shah Taba`
- The height of the walls were 9 *ziraa*` (5m and 10cm high)
- The wall on the eastern opening side was 22 *ziraa*` (about 10m) wide and the wall between the *Yamaani* and *Hajre Aswad* sides was 20 *ziraa*` (9m, 15cm) wide. The distance of the wall from *Rukne Shaami* to *Rukne Yamaani* 31 *ziraa*` (13 m, 58cm).
- To the right of the door-opening was 1m, 37cm hole which was dug.

HADHRAT IMAAM SHAAFI (rahmatullah alayh)

Imaam Shaafi (rahmatullah alayh) is one of those great personalities in the history of Islaam from whom the Ummat is benefiting until the present day. Imaam Saheb was born to a poor family in Yemen. He was deprived of fatherly-affection from a very young age. His mother took him from Yemen to Makkah Mukarramah. How was his education to begin here?

An orphan from a poor background had no real means of engaging in any sort of ta'leem. Imaam says, *"I passed my youth as an orphan in my mother's care. My mother had nothing to offer my teacher. I would attain the Ustaad's pleasure by overseeing the other children during his absence."*

He had no access to paper to write on. He had a small bag by him. He would write on clean bones and place them in his bag. At nights they had no means of light in their home, so he would go and write his notes under the state lamps nearby.

In order to learn the Arab culture and grammar, he spent a period of time going around the Arab villages, where he reached perfection in Arabic genealogy, poetry and grammar.

Most people were aware of the genealogy of men, but one day some people came to him and enquired about the genealogy of women. Imaam sat with them and explained the entire night and only terminated the next morning.

Allaah Ta`ala had imbibed in him a love for Ilm. Someone once asked him how much he loved Ilm, to which he replied, *"When any new knowledge falls to my ears, then all the limbs in my entire body desires to keep it memorised."*

He was asked how much of greed he has to acquiring knowledge, to which he replied, *"As much as a very greedy person has for wealth."*

He was asked what his condition was in searching for knowledge, to which he replied, *"The same condition as the search that mother who has lost her only child, would undergo."*

He used to say that, *"the value of the person who learns the Qur`aan Majeed increases; whoever discusses Fiqh, his worth increase; whoever writes down Hadith, his testimony becomes strong; whoever engages in reckoning, his opinion is strengthened; and he who does not protect his nafs achieves no benefit from his knowledge."*

He would never eat to his fill. Once he ate to his fill and spewed the food out. He would say, *"Eating to one's fill makes the body weighty, the heart remains heavy, one's alertness and intellect is diminished and sleep overcomes one."*

He kept a regular pattern for the nights. One third he would spend in writing, the second in Ibaadat and the third in resting.

It was his habit to complete the Qur`aan Majeed sixty times during the month of Ramadhaan. He would emphasise greatly on not wasting one's time in futility and unnecessary works. He would say that abstention from futility would result in the heart exuding a noor. He would also encourage people remain in isolation and not to intermingle. He would stress on eating less and would say that excessive eating leads to sleepiness. He greatly prohibited socialising with ignoramuses and asinine people.

He used to encourage asking the Ulama every type of question, because, he used to say, if one knows the mas`alah, then it will strengthen one's knowledge and if one did not know it, then it will be an addition to one's knowledge. He had an aversion for fame and would always comment that he wished that people read and benefited from the kitaabs he wrote, but that they not connect the kitaabs to him (i.e. he wished to remain anonymous).

During his last illness, Hadhrat Muzni (rahmatullah alayh) said that he visited Imaam Saheb and asked regarding his health. Imaam Saheb replied, *"I am about to bid farewell to my brothers. I do not know whether the abode of my soul will be Jannat, so that I may congratulate it, or whether it will be Jahannum so that I may mourn it."* He then started crying, and recited a poem, whose meaning is as follows:

When my heart hardens and my desires get constrained, I have laid my hopes on your forgiveness,
I know well my sins but by Rabb, when I compare it to Your forgiveness then the latter is much more greater,

If you take me to task for my sins, then too I will not lose hope on Your mercy, even though I am deserving of Jahannum due to my sins,

I am well aware of the multitude of my sins, but I also know well that Allaah Ta`ala is Forgiving and Merciful.

IS THERE ANY SUCH EXAMPLE?

The teacher wrote to his obedient and dutiful student that he desired to meet him so he should come to his house. The dutiful student immediately abandoned all his work and tasks and set off for his teacher. When he arrived he sat down with utmost respect and took the duas of his Ustaadh. The teacher's desire of meeting his student was fulfilled.

The Ustaadh had earlier told his family that an obedient and dutiful student of his would be arriving shortly and that he was a pious student who always performed Tahajjud Salaat. His household prepared a variety of dishes in expectation of this student.

After having completed the meal they set off for the Musjid for Esha Salaat. At home the daughter of the house folded the dastarkhaan and placed water and a musallah for the guest in readiness for his Tahajjud Salaat. This was done for his convenience so that when he awakens at night he is not put to difficulty.

After the Ustaadh and his student completed their Esha Salaat they returned home and both of them retired to their respective quarters to rest for the night.

The night passed and both of them set off for Fajr Salaat the next morning. The lady of the house went to the guest quarters and noticed that the water and musallah were untouched. She was greatly surprised. After Salaat the host and guest returned home. The host entered the house and his daughter came up to him and asked, *"Dear father! You have told us that this student of yours was very pious but he had eaten to his fill last night, whereas he should have eaten only a little so that he may engage in Ibaadat at night. Secondly, it appears that he had slept the whole night through and not awoken for Tahajjud Salaat, because he had not used any of the preparations we had left for him. Thirdly, it seams as though he left for Fajr Salaat without even having made wudhu. Tell me are these all not matters of great concern?"*

The Ustaadh listened attentively to what his daughter had told him and he made off towards his guest to explain to him her concerns.

The guest explained regarding his actions during that night saying, *"Respected Ustaadh! I intended keeping all this a secret but since you have asked me about it, I need to divulge it to you. The reason why I ate to my fill is because when I placed the first morsel in my mouth then I found it to be so tasty that I cannot explain in words. This taste led me to eat to my fill. My consumption of your Halaal and wholesome food had led me to spend the entire night contemplating over a single Aayat. I had spent the entire night, right until it was time for Fajr contemplating on this Aayat from which I had deduced one hundred Masaa`il. Since I was so engrossed in this one Aayat I did not get the opportunity to perform my Tahajjud Salaat. I still had my wudhu from Esha therefore did not see the need to renew it at the time of Fajr which explains why the water was left untouched."*

That's right! This is the fruits and benefits of Halaal sustenance, where in one night a hundred Masaa`il were deduced from one single Aayat. What a blessed era that was! What Allaah Ta`ala-fearing people they were! What high status of knowledge they had! This one incident is sufficient proof. The Ustaadh was none other than Imaam Shaafi` (rahmatullah alayh) and the student was Imaam Ahmed bin Hambal (rahmatullah alayh).

With the passing of time, teachers and students of that calibre were not born. Nowadays you will not find the like thereof. The ability to deduce and make Ijtihaad like they used to do is unheard of today, so too is that Halaal and wholesome sustenance which they earned.

Nowadays knowledge is only acquired by name. Nowadays even after having sent the whole night in sleep it becomes difficult to wake up for Fajr Salaat! Halaal sustenance is also sorely lacking in our society. There is no benefit in Haraam sustenance, which merely snatches away blessings and progress.

IMAAM AHMED BIN HAMBAL (rahmatullah alayh)

"When I left Iraq I did not leave any man more virtuous, more knowledgeable, more Allaah-fearing or more pious than Ahmed bin Hambal."

This statement was made by the great personality, Imaam Shaafi` (rahmatullah alayh) on the occasion of his leaving Iraq and he was referring to a personality who was none other than Imaam Ahmed bin Hambal (rahmatullah alayh).

His full name was Abu Abdillah Ahmed bin Hambal bin Hilaal Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh). He was born in the year 164 A.H. His father passed away when he was three years old and his mother was left to attend to his upbringing. At the tender age of four he was already Haafizul Qur`aan and he had begun the study of Hadith at the age of seven.

He chose to study under the Shuyookh of the time in Baghdaad. Amongst his teachers were luminaries such as Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayh), Sufyaan bin `Uyaina (rahmatullah alayh), Wakeeh bin Jaraah (rahmatullah alayh), Yahya bin Sa`eed (rahmatullah alayh), etc. He however acquired the most Ilm from Imaam Shaafi` (rahmatullah alayh). The relationship between Ustaadh and student was without example. Take note of Imaam Ahmed's (rahmatullah alayh) comments regarding his Ustaadh, *"For thirty years I had not performed a Salaat without having made dua for Imaam Shaafi (rahmatullah alayh)."* The Ustaadh himself used to speak highly of his student. After having benefited from the Mashaaikh of Baghdad, he set off for Kufaa, Basraa, Makkah Mukarramah, Madinatul Munawwarah, Yemen and Shaam where he studied under various Ulama.

The People of Ilm are all unanimous regarding his rank and stature. Imaam Abu Thaur (rahmatullah alayh) states, *"Imaam Ahmed (rahmatullah alayh) was a greater Aalim and Faqeeh than Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh)."*

When someone told Hadhrat Ali bin Madini (rahmatullah alayh) that Imaam Ahmed (rahmatullah alayh) was to his era as was Sa`eed bin Musayyab (rahmatullah alayh) to his, he commented, *"No! During the era of Sa`eed bin Musayyab (rahmatullah alayh) there were others who could compare to him whereas in present times there is none like Imaam Ahmed (rahmatullah alayh)."*

Ali bin Madini (rahmatullah alayh) had this to say regarding Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh), *"He is a Hujjat between us and Allaah Ta'ala. If I get a ruling from him regarding any mas'alah, then I practice on it with total conviction."*

Abu `Ubaid (rahmatullah alayh) said, *"There is no Aalim greater than Imaam Ahmed bin Hambal (rahmatullah alayh) insofar as Hadith and Sunnat are concerned and neither is there any comparison to him amongst the Ulama of Islaam."*

Imaam Saheb's son, Abdullah bin Ahmed (rahmatullah alayhima) used to say that during the night and day his father would perform 300 raka'ts of Nafl Salaat and after he underwent a great trial and suffered tremendous weakness he reduced it to 150 raka'ts.

The trial and test experienced by Imaam Ahmed bin Hambal (rahmatullah alayh)

Hadhrat Sa`d (radhiallahu anhu) once asked Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) who amongst man would suffer the greatest trials and tribulations. Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) replied, *"The Ambiyaa and those who bear testimony to them. Allaah Ta`ala will test a man in proportion to his Imaan. If a man's Imaan is weak then his tests would be proportionate and if his Imaan is strong then his tests will be much greater. These tests and tribulations will remain with a person until such a time that all his sins are forgiven."*

In accordance to this Hadith, Imaam Ahmed bin Hambal (rahmatullah alayh) also had his day and Allaah Ta`ala chose him to show the Ummat the correct path regarding the mas'alah of *Khalq-e-Qu`raan*. Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) refused to concede to the view of the Khalifah Mamoon in claiming that the Qur`aan is Makhlooq (a creation). Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) maintained the view that the Qur`aan was not Makhlooq (that it is the uncreated Word of Allaah Ta'ala).

The *Mu`tazilah* (a deviant sect) claimed that the Qur`aan Majeed is Makhlooq. During that era their leader, Ibn Abi Dawood had close relations with the Khalifah Mamoon. The result of this was the Khalifah had persecuted the Ulama-e-Haqq of the time. Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) was also imprisoned. Mamoon did not reign for long and he passed away. His successor, Khalifah Mu`tasim Billah was even more dogmatic on Mamoon's stance regarding this mas'alah, and he had Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) lashed 80 lashes. Each lash was so severe that according to a witness, Muhammad bin Ismail, had an elephant been struck with it, it would have screamed. When he was still left in a state of consciousness, the Khalifah summonsed his release. He was jailed for a total of 28 months.

The Khalifah greatly regretted the severity of Imaam Saheb's treatment, that he deputed the governor of Baghdad, Ishaq bin Ibrahim to see to Imaam Saheb's recuperation.

After Mu`tasim Billaah, his successor, Waathiq Billaah, also held the same view of the Qur`aan Majeed being *makhlooq*, and he had also imprisoned and persecuted many Ulama and

Muhadditheen. However, he did not deal very harshly with Imaam Saheb (rahmatullah alayh), but had him banished.

After him, Mutawakkil was made the Khalifah. He had put a stop to all those beliefs which were in conflict with the Qur`aan Majeed and Hadith. He initiated respectful and honourable treatment for Imaam Saheb and he even made an announcement that the Qur`aan Majeed is not *makhlooq*.

In order to make up for the wrongs of his predecessors, Mutawakkil paid great attention to Imaam Saheb. He would constantly seek Imaam Saheb's *mashwera* on matters pertaining to the state etc. Imaam Saheb was showered with gifts and money, etc. which he spurned, saying that he had been kept safe from it all his life, and now on his last, he is being caught up in it.

He passed away in Rabiul Awwal at the age of 77. Thousands of people had attended his Janaazah. Imaam Saheb's son, Abdullah bin Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) said that he had heard from his father, *"The distinction between us and the Ahle Bid`ah can be seen at the time of Janaazah."* Allaah Ta`ala had made true his word, because no one was concerned when his greatest adversary and opponent Ibn Abi Dawood had passed away. There was a mere smattering of people and state representatives at his funeral, considering that Ibn Abi Dawood was the Chief Justice of the time.

DON'T SIT IDLE

There is a common saying '*harkat me' barkat*' (There is blessing in movement). A person should always be occupied with something. There is always some blessings in being occupied, not only worldly benefit but benefit for the Aakhirah as well. There is great benefit in a person's physical and spiritual being if he keeps himself occupied.

In every way it is an accepted fact that man must never sit idle. This world for man, without work, will be a wasteful existence, whether he engages in worldly work or Deeni work. In Deeni work, there is benefit for both this world and hereafter. All these free moments are such blessings from Allaah Ta`ala which we should take full advantage of and try to acquire the Pleasure of Allaah Ta`ala and earn Jannat. When we do not carry out good works, then we will forever regret. As it is if we look around, we see that those people who are idle and have no work, others regard them as evil and also a burden to life.

Mufti Shafi Saheb (rahmatullah alayh), once whilst advising his children said, *"Never sit idle. I will tell you something, which I normally would not talk about, but as advice I will inform you thereof. I never sit idle, to such an extent that even when I visit the toilet, I keep myself busy by washing out the water-jug, so that others may not be inconvenienced by it (being dirty)."*

This is the life of our buzrugs, who regarded keeping themselves occupied as a success. Another point is that keeping oneself busy is beneficial for the body. According to the medical experts and doctors, when a person keeps his body occupied in some activity then the blood circulates and the strength in the heart and brain intensifies. One should always keep busy, and regard activity as the means of success in this world and Aakhirah. Inactivity leads to one's image falling in the sight of others.

As Allaah Ta`ala tells Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), *"When you are complete, then stand up (in Salaat) and yearn towards your Rabb."* [That is, when you (O Muhammad - sallallahu alaihi wasallam) have completed with your task (of propagating the Deen and other duties), then prepare yourself for another duty, and that is to engage in Salaat, thikr, tilaawat, etc.)

Respected brothers! When the Master of mankind was never free of engagement in work and he was ordered to tire himself in fulfilling his duties, then why is it that we cannot engage in some Deeni occupation when we have completed our worldly activities? We should tire ourselves in making *astaghfaar*, thikr, etc. Especially if you have Qadha Salaat to fulfil, then do not sit idle, complete this outstanding debt you have. Do not leave today's work for tomorrow. Give due consideration to your Deeni work as well when you concentrate on your worldly tasks. Accomplish that task for which you were sent into this world for. Tire yourself in achieving that goal which will bring you everlasting success.

In essence, Allaah Ta`ala has sent mankind to earth to fulfil a task, therefore you should never sit idle.

HUMOUR CORNER

- A fire broke out in a factory. A vehicle went straight into the fire and extinguished it completely. The factory-owner was so pleased with this driver for his bravery and fast-thinking that he gave him a reward of 10 000 rupees. The factory owner asked the man, *"What will you do with this money?"*
  The driver replied, *"Firstly, I am going to replace the brakes on my vehicle."*

- Son: *"Father dear, when will I be big enough to be able to go out of the house without having to ask mom for permission?"*
  Father: (Sighing heavily) *"Son! Even I am not that big enough."*

- Two men were crying uncontrollably, sitting next to an elephant in the zoo. A passer-by asked the reason for their crying. They replied, *"The elephant of the zoo has died."* The man commented, *"Have you developed such an affection for the elephant?" No,"* came the reply, *"Our officer has instructed us to dig the grave."*

- Teacher: *"Use the word holiday in a sentence."*
  Student: *"Sir! Give us a week holiday."*

- The father bought a new tie and tied it around his neck. When he came home he asked his son if he knew what it was. The son replied, *"It is a handkerchief to wipe your nose."*

- Doctor: *"Good news! The operation on your ears was a success."*
  Patient: *"Speak up louder, I cannot hear anything."*

- A local municipality election candidate was invited to a football match. When the match was over he commented, *"I am grieved to see that both the teams had to run after one ball. Vote for me and I will give each player one ball each."*

- Patient: *"Will I be able to read after putting on spectacles?"*
  Doctor: *"Perfectly!"*
  Patient: *"What can be better than this? My father is also illiterate like me, so will you be able to make up a pair of spectacles for him, as well?"*

- Two villages came into the city for the first time. One of them saw a huge bus and commented, *"Just see what a huge animal running."* The other villager's eyes fell on a car behind the bus and he said, *"Yes, and see its child running behind it."*

- Father: *"Son! Were the questions in the examinations difficult?"*

Son: *"No father, the questions were simple, it was the answers which were difficult."*

- The teacher was teaching his class about electricity. *"Let us assume that if I switch the button for the fan on and the fan does not move, then what does this mean?"* A student replies, *"It means that you have not paid the electricity bill."*

- One man asks another man, who happened to be angry, what the time was. He gave him two slaps and said, *"It is so much o'clock."* The other man then said, *"I thank Allaah Ta`ala that it is not 12 o'clock."*

HALAAL MORSEL

There was a buzrug, Shah Jee Abdullah Saheb, who resided in Deoband. He was unlettered, but pious nonetheless. He was a devout Aabid.

His occupation was to cut grass, make bundles and sell it. At that time, the price for one bundle of grass was 6 *paisa* (about 6 cents). He would not take a cent more or less. Whenever people required fodder for their animals they would only go to Shah Jee to purchase from him, although there were many other men and women who sold bundles of grass, theirs would always remain unsold. People found that the blessings in their home flourished when they bought from Shah Jee. They would wait in line hoping to buy from him. When they would see him coming with a bundle, they would all run towards him. Whosoever laid his hands on the bundle first, Shah Jee would sell it to him for the fixed price of 6 *paisa*, whether it was summer, winter, rain or whatever, he never took more or less. It was his habit to spend 2 *paisas* in sadaqah for the poor, 2 *paisas* for his household use and the remaining 2 *paisas* he would keep aside. At the end of every year, whatever he has saved, he would invite the buzrugs of Deoband for a meal. He would invite Hadhrat Moulana Qaasim Saheb (rahmatullah alayh), Hadhrat Moulana Rafiud Deen Saheb (rahmatullah alayh), Hadhrat Moulana Rashid Ahmad Saheb (rahmatullah alayh) and Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Yaqub Saheb (rahmatullah alayh), who was the first principal of Daarul Uloom Deoband.

If Hadhrat Haaji Imdaadullah Saheb was visiting Daarul Uloom Deoband, then he would also be invited. Moulana Muhammad Yaqub Saheb used to say, *"The entire year, we would eagerly await the day when Shah Jee would invite us for the meal to his home."* He would also say that for forty days after they had eaten at his home, they would discern noor in their hearts. They would also discern a greater inclination and desire to perform Salaat, make Tilaawat, engage in Thikr, etc., etc. They would eagerly wait the entire year for that invitation.

Once Shah Jee fell ill and he called for Moulana Muhammad Yaqub Saheb (rahmatullah alayh). He told him that he had saved up some money and that he should please invite the others on his behalf. When this money was sent to Hadhrat Moulana Yaqub Saheb (rahmatullah alayh), he first took a bath, changed his clothes and cleaned the place. He then personally cooked the food and invited the others for the meal. This, then is the effect of Halaal earnings. It creates a noor in the heart and increases one's fervour to engage in Ibaadat.

THE ADVICES OF NABI (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)

Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had offered various advices on various occasions. Every little bit of advice offered by him (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) is worthy of being written in gold. Whosoever had the good fortune of having practiced on these advices, found success and peace in both worlds. Any believer, right until Qiyaamah, that practices on the advices of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), will enjoy eternal success.

We will present to you a narration wherein Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) offered some salient advices to Hadhrat Abu Zarr (radhiallahu anhu). Hadhrat Abu Zarr (radhiallahu anhu) says that one day he presented himself to Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and asked, *"O Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam)! Give me some advice."*
Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) then said, *"I advise you to fear Allaah Ta'ala, because Taqwa will add great lustre in all your works."*
Hadhrat Abu Zarr (radhiallahu anhu) said, *"Please give me more advice."*
Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) then said, *"Regard recitation of the Qur`aan Majeed and Thikr incumbent upon yourself, because tilaawat of Qur`aan Majeed and Thikr are means of you being remembered in the heavens and it will be a means of noor for you on earth (i.e. if you make tilaawat and Thikr, then Allaah Ta`ala will remember you in the gathering of the angels)."*

Hadhrat Abu Zarr (radhiallahu anhu) asked for more advice. Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, *"Make extended silence necessary upon yourself, because silence chases shaitaan away and is an assistance in your Deeni matters. (i.e. if you adopt silence then you will be able to contemplate upon the blessings of Allaah Ta`ala and another benefit is that it saves you from the fitnahs of shaitaan, which befall one mainly through the use of the tongue)."*

Hadhrat Abu Zarr (radhiallahu anhu) asked for even more advice, to which Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, *"Save yourself from excessive laughter, because excessive laughter kills the heart and diminishes the lustre from the face (i.e. excessive laughter creates de-sensitivity and unwariness to the heart, which extinguishes the light of Ilm and ma`rifat – recognition of Allaah Ta'ala, which relies on a living heart)."*

Hadhrat Abu Zarr (radhiallahu anhu) asked for more advice, and Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, *"Speak the truth, even though it may be bitter (i.e. speak the truth in matters of Haqq, even though people may detest you for it)."*

Hadhrat Abu Zarr (radhiallahu anhu) asked again for advice and Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) continued, *"Do not fear the censure and rebuke of any detractor when spreading the Message of Allaah Ta`ala."*

Hadhrat Abu Zarr (radhiallahu anhu) asked for some more advice, and Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, *"The faults you find in yourself should prevent you from disclosing the faults of others."* [Kanzul Ummaal, page 383, vol. 15]

That is, when you know that you yourself are full of faults and you are aware of the flaws in your soul, then it is most inappropriate that you disclose or even look at the faults of others.

In executing the duty of *Amr bil Ma`roof Nahy anil Munkar* you should most certainly hint at the faults and wrongs of others, and encourage them to come onto the right path, in fact, it is incumbent upon you, if you see someone doing wrong, to prevent them from it, however this should not be done with the intention of picking on others' faults and belittling them. You should also most certainly not indulge in backbiting about them. When you keep your gaze all the time on your own faults and sins, then you will most certainly consider yourself the worst of all.

Although these advices of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) were given to Hadhrat Abu Zarr (radhiallahu anhu), they are most certainly not only directed to him. In fact, they apply and are for the benefit of every Ummati; man, woman, old and young. Practicing on this is necessary upon everyone. The basis of all this is fear of Allaah Ta`ala. When one inculcates Taqwa into one's life, then all other matters become easy and manageable.

We supplicate to Allaah Ta`ala that He instil the ability to practice on all these advices, firstly to the writer and to all others. Aameen.

HIDDEN THEFT

A few examples of hidden theft:

1. To travel without paying the fee
2. To steal electricity
3. To use state or private phones stealthily
4. To cut off and take fruits or flowers without seeking permission from the owner
5. To make use of an amaanat which has been placed with you
6. To go to an invitation and then take something without the true happiness of the host
7. To take others (uninvited) to an invitation
8. To omit a Fardh, Sunnat or Waajib Salaat
9. To utilise the phone or anything else without the owner's happiness or consent, when visiting the home of another, some Madrasah, shop, factory, etc.
10. To intentionally offer wrong advice to someone wherein there may be personal benefit.

THE MOST BELOVED SUNNATS

Yes, we will now give you some Sunnats pertaining to eating. Read it very intently and try to inculcate them all into your lives.

If there are various different types of dishes on the dastarkhaan, then it will be permissible to take from whichever side on fancies to take something.

It is Sunnat to keep honey and vinegar in the home.

It is preferable to use the teeth to separate a piece of meat (which may be in your plate) than to use a knife. This facilitates easy digestion and also enhances the taste.

If a large chunk of meat has been cooked, then it will be permissible to cut it into smaller pieces with a knife.

Do not eat very hot food. Wait for it to cool slightly then eat it.

If whilst eating a morsel of food falls down, pick it up, clean it and eat it. Do not leave it for shaitaan.

If someone comes whilst you are partaking of a meal, then ask him to join you. If you are eating with someone else, then as far as possible allow him to eat to his content.

It is appropriate to allow the servant who has prepared the meal to join you for the meal, or give him his meal separately. Even if the food is little, then too, you should give at least one or two morsels to the servant. So that he may taste it.

There is always great blessings in that home, where after eating, the inhabitants wash their hands and rinse their mouths.

You should lick your fingers and the plate after eating, because we do not know in which part Allaah Ta`ala had placed the Barkat of the food.

When licking your fingers then start with the middle finger, thereafter the forefinger and finally the thumb (if you used all five fingers, then you should lick your ring finger and lastly your small finger).

Do not stand up before the dastarkhaan is lifted. That is, first the dastrakhaan should be lifted and then those who ate may stand up.

It is Sunnat to spread the dastarkhaan on the floor and eat.

After eating, this dua should be recited which would render all sins forgiven,

اللهم بارك لنا فيه و اطعمنا خيرا منه

"O Allaah! Grant us barkat in this and feed us better than this."

When you drink milk, then recite:

اللهم بارك لنا فيه و زدنا منه

"O Allaah! Grant us barkat in this and increase in it for us."

THE IMPORTANCE OF DUA

The literal meaning of *dua* is to call out and the Shar`i meaning is to implore in the Court of Allaah Ta`ala for our needs to be fulfilled.

Dua is the natural solution for all of life's complexities. How fortunate is that person who is able to present his problems and supplicate before his Creator, Who listens to everyone and has Power over everything.

Dua is a means of man's needs being fulfilled and it is also a means of gaining proximity to Allaah Ta`ala. The dua which is made in its true form can shake the Arsh of Allaah Ta`ala.

It is therefore necessary for the one making dua to understand and appreciate the importance thereof. If we inculcate and bring into practice the proper etiquettes of dua, then Insha-Allaah Ta`ala our duas will be accepted.

The virtue of dua according to the Qur`aan Majeed

1). Allaah Ta`ala says, *"And your Rabb says, 'Call unto Me, I will answer you. Indeed those who are arrogant from My Ibaadat (dua), will soon enter Jahannum disgraced."* [Surah Ghaafir, Aayat 60]

This blessed Aayat gives the injunction for us to make dua. Together with this it also gives us the glad tidings that Allaah Ta`ala answers all our duas and that He is displeased with those who do not ask of Him.

How wonderful is it not that the people of the world get irritated if they are asked (for something) whereas Allaah Ta`ala gets pleased when He is asked and He gets displeased when He is not asked! When a person is asked for something and he gives it once, then for the second time he will offer some excuse, the third time he will say something untoward and the fourth time, he may even cut ties, whereas with Allaah Ta`ala the matter is altogether different.

If someone asks of Allaah Ta`ala, he gets it the first time, if he asks again he'll get it the second time, third time, fourth time, etc., etc. The more he asks of Allaah Ta`ala, the more he gets. In fact, the person who asks for all his needs to Allaah Ta`ala and he asks all the time also, then Allaah Ta`ala makes such a person His Wali (friend).

2). Allaah Ta`ala says, *"My Rabb is not uneasy (he cares not) if you do not call unto Him."* [Surah Furqaan, Aayat 77]

The object here is that if people do not call unto Allaah Ta`ala to relieve their calamities, etc. then He is not bothered by it. Some Ulama have stated that the meaning of this Aayat is *"I had no need to create you, except that you make dua unto Me and that I answer your duas. That you ask Me for forgiveness and I forgive you."*

This displays the Quality of Allaah Ta'ala, that when someone repents to Him then He displays His Quality of Forgiveness. This is the reason why it is stated in a Hadith that if there were no sinners on earth, then Allaah Ta`ala would create a new nation who would commit sin and then ask for His Forgiveness, so that He may display His Quality of Forgiveness and Mercy.

Understand this with the following example that if there was a wealthy man who was extremely generous, but there is none to come to his door to ask, so how then will he be able to show his generosity? He will wish that lest any beggar come to his door so that he may give him something. In such a scenario, any beggar would appear to be a desirous and good thing. Similarly, if anyone asks of Allaah Ta`ala, then He loves it.

3). Allaah Ta`ala says, *"And ask of Allaah from His Virtues."* [Surah Nisaa, Aayat 32]

4). Allaah Ta`ala says, *"And when My slave asks of me, then indeed I am close by."* [Surah Baqarah, Aayat 186]

This blessed Aayat gives us the glad tidings that Allaah Ta`ala is close by all the time.

AMBIYAA

Questions:

1. Name that Nabi under whose control was the wind.
2. Name that Ambiyaa who could converse with animals.
3. To which place was Hadhrat Shuaib (alaihis salaam) sent as a Nabi?
4. Which Nabi is known as Aadam II?
5. Name that Nabi whom Allaah Ta`ala had placed in the belly of a fish for a period of time.
6. Name that Nabi who was flung into a fire by a king and Allaah Ta`ala kept him alive and safe.

THE STATUS AND HONOUR OF DUA

"It has been reported by Hadhrat Nu`maan bin Basheer (radhiallahu anhu) that Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, 'Dua is an Ibaadat.' Then he (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) recited the Aayat, 'And your Rabb says, 'Call unto Me, I will answer you. Indeed those who are arrogant from My Ibaadat (dua), will soon enter Jahannum disgraced.''" [Tirmidhi Shareef, page 175, vol.2]

Explanation

The actual Hadith is that Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, *"Dua is an Ibaadat."*

The import and meaning of this statement of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is that he wanted to make clear that no person must be under the misconception that dua is just another means of achieving one's aim and objective in life, just like any other effort and attempt, in that if one's objective is achieved he was successful and if his objective was not accomplished, then his dua was just another futile exercise and effort. No, in fact, dua is an act of Ibaadat. And just like all acts of Ibaadat, it warrants certain reward in the hereafter.

The Aayat cited by Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) also clearly indicates that dua is an act of ibaadat.

The following Hadith explains that dua is the essence and 'brain' of ibaadat, *"It has been reported by Anas (radhiallahu anhu) that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, 'Dua is the core of Ibaadat."* [Mishkaat, vol. 1, page 194]

Explanation

The reality of dua is that one should implore Allaah Ta`ala with humility and meekness, making one's dependence on Him clear. It is without doubt that dua is the core and essence of all ibaadat.

"It has been reported by Abu Hurairah (radhiallahu anhu) that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, 'Nothing is more honourable unto Allaah Ta`ala than dua.' [ibid.]

Explanation

Once we have realised that dua is the core and essence of Ibaadat, and that ibaadat was the purpose of man's creation, then it follows and is obvious that of all the actions and deeds of man, dua is the most honourable, valuable and important. Dua is the most efficacious in drawing the mercy of Allaah Ta`ala.

"It has been reported from Abdullah ibn Umar (radhiallahu anhuma) that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, 'He amongst you for whom the doors of dua are opened, the doors of mercy are also opened. There is nothing more beloved to Allaah Ta`ala than to ask Him for A'fiyat." [Mishkaat, page 195, vol.1]

Explanation

The meaning of *A`fiyat* is to seek safety and protection from all worldly, *Ukhrawi,* apparent and hidden calamities and misfortunes. Therefore the person who makes dua for *A'fiyat,* is in reality admitting and conceding his weakness and placing his life and safety in Allaah Ta'ala's trust. He is declaring that without the protection and grace of Allaah Ta'ala, his life is not at ease. He is imploring Allah Ta`ala to save him from all difficulties and calamities. This demonstrates total humility and helplessness, which in fact is perfect slavery. This is the reason why Allaah Ta`ala loves most the dua for *A'fiyat*.

Another point in this Hadith is that when a person makes dua then he is blessed with Allah Ta'ala's mercy.

Dua in reality, does not refer to those words uttered by the tongue. The words of dua , at most can said to be the garments and mould of the dua. The reality of dua lies in the hearts of human and in the desire of the souls. This is what the Hadith refers to when it speaks of the doors of dua opening

to a person. This then leads to the doors of mercy being opened for him. May Allaah Ta`ala bless all of us with this.

"It has been reported from Abu Hurairah (radhiallahu anhu) who said that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, 'He who does not ask of Allaah, Allaah becomes angry with him.'" [Mishkaat, page 195 vol.1]

Explanation

There is no one in this world who becomes displeased if nothing is asked of him. This even applies to a father, that if his child continuously asks for something he becomes irritated. However, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) explains in this Hadith that Allaah Ta`ala is Most Merciful and Honourable, and He is so Beneficent to His slaves, that if they don't ask of Him He becomes displeased and when they ask of Him, He is pleased.

From the above Hadith we realize that the most beloved and valuable act in the sight of Allaah Ta`ala is dua.

"It has been reported from Ibn Masood (radhiallahu anhu) who said that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, 'Ask Allaah from His virtues, because Allaah Ta`ala loves when His servants supplicate to Him. The grandest of all ibaadat is to await freedom and ease (from the difficulties and calamities experienced y the one making dua).'" [Mishkaat, page 195 vol.1]

THE SEED OF JANNAT

The pomegranate is mentioned thrice in the Qur`aan Majeed as *Rummaan,* and on all three occasions there is valuable advice for mankind. For example, in Surah An`aam, there is an instruction that when the crops of dates, olive and pomegranate are harvested, then immediately a portion of it is to be given to the rightful ones. This indicates that the natural blessings bestowed by Allaah Ta`ala are to be enjoyed by all, and that it is disliked and detested by Allaah Ta`ala that those who own and have sown the crops, keep all of it for themselves.

During the time of Hadhrat Moosa (alaihis salaam) the pomegranate had become common in Palestine, Syria, Spain and Lebanon.

There are many natural benefits in pomegranate. It is also very nutritious. Besides sugar, there also many vitamins contained therein, like phosphorous, sodium, calcium sulphur and folic. Its juice has a pleasant taste and is nourishing. It is beneficial for heart ailments. Sweet pomegranate is benefice for constipation and sour pomegranate aids the stomach and removes worms. It is also beyond compare insofar as heart ailments are concerned. The juice of pomegranate aids stomach ailments. The juice of pomegranate is very helpful for diarrhoea. It is also beneficial as a convalescent to remove weakness. It removes blood weakness and is also beneficial to control blood pressure, piles, etc. It gives strength to the mind and heart. It has been also claimed that the use of pomegranate removes the natural human urge of jealousy and hatred.

When the skin of the pomegranate root is boiled in water and fed to a sick person then it kills worms etc. found in the intestines. This water is also beneficial for the treatment of TB and many fevers. It removes weakness from the body after a bout of malaria.

In essence, the pomegranate is a great blessing from the blessings of Allaah Ta`ala. In Surah Rahman Allaah Ta`ala states, while describing the condition of Jannah, *"In them will be fruits, dates and pomegranate. Which of the Signs of your Rabb do you deny?"*

CHILDREN WHO SPOKE IN THEIR INFANCY

Question: How many children are there that spoke during their infancy?

Answer: There were four:
1. The infant of Juraij—i.e. that child who testified to the chastity of Hadhrat Juraij (rahmatullah alayh) and absolved him of blame which was levelled on him by the prostitute, that the child was his. Hadhrat Juraij (rahmatullah alayh) merely pointed at the child, who spoke out naming a certain shepherd to be his father.
2. The second infant was the one that testified to the innocence of Hadhrat Yusuf (alaihis salaam).
3. The third infant was the child of Fir`oun's daughter's slave, that warned Fir`oun's daughter against kufr.
4. The fourth infant was Hadhrat Isaa (alaihis salaam).

THE SALT MINE

The was a vagabond youngster whose appearance was far from refined. From a young age he strayed onto the wrong path and became infatuated with a girl. During the last portion of the night he ventured to her home. He had barely climbed onto the wall when he heard a voice reciting the following Aayat from the Qur`aan Majeed, *"Has the time not yet come for those who believe that their hearts submit to Allaah Ta`ala?"*

No sooner had this Aayat been recited that it had an effect on his heart. He turned on his heels and walked back. This vagabond youngster turned out to be the Wali of his time and a regular performer of Tahajjud Salaat. History knows him to be Fudhail bin Ayaadh (rahmatullah alayh).

Alas! If only today also the recitation of a single Aayat exercises such a strong effect on the heart.

Alas! Today also if a rebel of Allaah Ta`ala listens to a Hadith of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) he can acquire the rank of Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh), a disobedient person can become the likes of Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayh) and an evil person can reach the stage of Hadhrat Abdul Qaadar Jalaani (rahmatullah alayh). However that fervour exists no more.

The society we live in and the mannerisms which we have adopted exercises a great effect on us. If the society was good it would have been an encouragement towards piety and good deeds. The water of modesty has also dried up. When the society is conducive, then an ex-vagrant such as Fudhail bin Aayaadh (rahmatullah alayh) becomes one who keeps the night alive in Ibaadat and the heart of a great oppressor such as Yusuf bin Hajjaaj melts and becomes like wax on his final moments. No fancy effort or exercise is required to effect this change, just one simple Aayat, Hadith or salient advice is enough to change the disobedient to obedient.

On the contrary when the society is evil and devoid of modesty and shame then change is difficult if not impossible. We are all privy of the fact that no oppressor began his oppression in his mother's stomach, neither did a thief contemplate his theft while in his mother's stomach, nor did anyone teach a bandit the tricks of his trade before he was born.

Yes, if we merely glance at our society today it will not be difficult to see the roots of all the vice, evils, bribery, immodesty and immorality. In this type of society, the leaders take oath on Allaah Ta'ala's Name and commit their oppression. There is no sign or trace of justice. State officials are

drowned in bribery. Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, *"The briber and the one who takes a bribe will both be in the Fire of Jahannum."*

In this type of society when an immoral person listens to an Aayat of the Qur`aan Majeed, it does not settle on his heart, neither do the blessed words of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) open his eyes.

Yes, the eyes will only open when the doors of punishment are opened and annihilation is imminent.

It is a fact that the society is like a salt mine. Whatever enters it becomes one with it.

HOW IS SALVATION POSSIBLE FROM NATURAL DISASTERS AND CALAMITIES?

Taubah – The antidote for sins

Today the Muslims, individually and collectively, are beset and surrounded from all sides with all sorts of problems, calamities and worries. We are beleaguered by kuffaar, fussaaq, insecurity, restless, earthquakes, droughts etc. etc. The basis and reason for this unfortunate state is our evil actions and sins.

Allaah Ta`ala says, *"Mischief has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of man had earned that Allaah Ta`ala may give them a taste of some their deeds, in order that they may turn back."* [Surah Rum, Aayat no.41]

Today a large portion of the Muslim community are engaged in the sins of abandoning Salaah, lies, backbiting, bribery, theft, immodesty, immorality, oppression, non-fulfilment of Hajj and Zakaat, etc. etc. In these conditions our existence is purely because of the charity of Rahmat bestowed upon us by Allaah Ta`ala, otherwise we are sowing the seeds of our own destruction.

Hope for mercy and forgiveness

Notwithstanding our deplorable condition there is no need for hopelessness, in fact it is necessary that we turn and repent to The Most Merciful and Forgiving. Allaah Ta`ala says, *"O My servants! Those who have wronged their souls should not lose hope in the Mercy of Allaah Ta`ala. Indeed Allaah Ta`ala forgives all sins."* [Surah Zumar]

In another Aayat Allaah Ta`ala says, *"And He accepts the taubah of His servants and forgives all sins."* [Surah Shuraa]

Taubah

In Surah Tahreem, ordering us to make Taubah, Allaah Ta`ala says, *"O you who believe turn to Allaah Ta`ala with sincere repentance, in the hope that your Rabb will remove from you your ills and admit you to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, the Day that Allaah Ta`ala will not permit to be humiliated the Nabi and those who believe with him…"*

Is there a limit to Divine Mercy? Taubah not only warrants forgiveness but Allaah Ta`ala converts the evil deeds to good ones.

It is reported in a Hadith-e-Qudsi, where Allaah Ta`ala says, *"O son of Aadam! If your sins (are so much that they) reach the clouds and then you seek forgiveness of Me, I will most certainly forgive you and not even be concerned about it.*

O son of Aadam! If you come into My Presence with so many sins which fill the entire earth, and you meet me in such a condition that you don't ascribe any partners to Me then I will shower you with so much of forgiveness which will fill the earth." [Mishkaat, page 204, vol.1]

Allaah Ta'ala's Pleasure at Taubah

Allaah Ta`ala expresses love for those who make taubah. The extent of Allaah Ta`ala's Pleasure at a sinner's taubah can be gauged from the following Hadith, where Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said, *"Allaah Ta`ala gets even more pleased with a sinner's Taubah than that person who is travelling through the desert. This traveller, with his conveyance fully laden with all his possessions decides to take a rest. Whilst he is resting, his camel strays and gets lost. When he awakens and realises that his camel is lost, he runs around desperately seeking his camel. He is deeply concerned. He realises that there is no food or water for miles around and he has no means of survival. In this dejected and forlorn state he goes and sits under the tree awaiting death. He dozes off and when his eyes open, he sees his camel with all its load standing in front of him. He is so overcome with joy that he blurts out, 'O Allaah! You are my slave and I am Your Rabb (i.e. in this state of ecstasy, he doesn't realise what he is saying). Now just as this man is happy and pleased, Allaah Ta`ala becomes more happy at the sinner who repents."* [Mishkaat, page 205, vol. 1]

The fruits of Taubah and Astaghfaar

Taubah and Astaghfaar are not merely the cause of forgiveness of sins, rather it has countless worldly and Deeni benefits. Allaah Ta`ala says, *"O you who believe! You should all repent before Allaah so that you may be successful."* [Surah Noor, Aayat 31]

"And you people should seek forgiveness from your Rabb and turn unto Him, and He will grant you a happy life for an appointed term." [Surah Hood, Aayat 3]

Hadhrat Nooh (alaihis salaam) reminded his nation about seeking forgiveness and explained to them about the fruits thereof. This is stated in the Qur`aan Majeed as follows, *"Then I told them to seek forgiveness from their Rabb, for indeed He is Most Forgiving. He will shower you with abundant rains, grant you plentiful wealth and children and make gardens for you beneath which rivers flow."* [Surah Nooh]

At another juncture, Allaah Ta`ala states, *"Indeed Allaah loves those who repent."* [Surah Taubah]

Allaah Ta`ala will grant ease and escape from all difficulties for that person who makes repentance binding on himself. Allaah Ta`ala will also sustain such a person from avenues which he never imagined.

The conditions for the acceptance of taubah

Taubah is not mere lip-service. For the acceptance of Taubah, Imaam Nawawi (rahmatullah alayh) has outlines some conditions:

First condition

One needs to immediately abandon and cease that sin.

Second condition

He should feel regret and remorse at having committed the sin.

Third condition

He should make a firm resolve never to return to that sin again.

If the sin involved usurping the rights of someone else, then together with sincere taubah, one has to seek the pardon and forgiveness of the oppressed and whatever right was usurped from him should be returned. For example if money was stolen then it has to be returned to the rightful owner.

Nowadays, we rarely make Taubah and even if we do make taubah we hardly take these conditions into consideration. There is absolutely no reason why, if we Muslims turn and repent sincerely to Allaah Ta`ala, then He will turn our punishment into success and grant us victory in all our worldly and Deeni works.

May Allaah Ta`ala grant us all the guidance and fervour to practice on what we have heard. Aameen.

SYMPATHY OR SIN?

A man was once mentioning the close bond and friendship he held with his neighbour. In explaining their good relations and mutual understanding and how they would help each other out, he said, *"The department in which my neighbour works offers many perks and benefits for the convenience of their staff. They give free petrol, service, etc. to their staff who use their own cars. Now, my neighbour does not own a car, so he is unable to benefit from all these benefits. Since I have a car, I have registered the car in his name, so that he can claim the company benefits for the car. The company assumes the car to be his and they grant him the relevant benefits. This has been the case for many years now."*

When he was asked why they did this, he replied, *"Our relationship is such. I knew that even though I registered the car on his name, I would still use it and there would be no problems in this regard between us. If by just registering a car on someone else's name there are so many benefits, why should I not take advantage of it?"*

Another person once explained his friendship thus, *"We have such a good relationship that if he or anyone in his home gets ill, then I get medicine for them on my name, because my company's medical aid pays for it, and my friend does not have to pay for anything."*

Both these people have explained their friendship and relationship in such a proud way that it signifies open-heartedness and generosity. They explain their deeds with such high regard that they are deserving of tremendous rewards in both this world and the hereafter.

Both these people have not realised that in their 'benefaction' and sympathy for one another, either for the neighbour or close friend, they are abusing the trust and wealth of their respective companies. Such sympathy and 'generosity' entails speaking lies. In the first instance the owner of the car had falsely placed the car on his neighbour's name and then every month the neighbour had to falsely claim from the company for the petrol, etc. The car was in fact used by the real owner and the other person had to engage in lies year after year.

In the second case, the friend who bought the medicine on his name had to speak a lie to acquire the medicine and then he also had to involve the doctor in this lie to prescribe the medicine falsely for him, whilst he was in no need for it.

Another point is if a company had devised some structure whereby their staff benefits, then this is naturally meant for the staff only. There must be some rules and regulations attached therewith. It will not be acceptable to the company that the staff member transfers his benefits to some other person, which the company does not intend.

These benefits which the neighbour and friend had acquired and 'devised' are clearly Haraam and impermissible. They are guilty of committing sins, whereas they labour under the complete misconception that they are doing good deeds which are worthy of reward.

These two incidents were cited as mere example, however, if we look around us, we will see many, many such examples where people abuse the trust and wealth of companies, employers etc. Wherever any company cedes some benefit for their staff, those benefits are squeezed to their fullest by the staff and in many instances, wrongfully. This requires lies to be spoken, rules to be broken or the perpetration of some other crime. For example, some companies allow their staff to claim a specific amount for the petrol they use in their vehicles. Now, some people deem it necessary to claim every last cent of petrol allowed to them, even though they did not use that much of fuel.

On the other hand, some companies grant their staff a certain allowance for rental. Now the staff member may get a place to rent which is less than what the company had allotted for him, so by hook or crook, he makes up a bill to give to the company where he gets the full amount allotted for him. The same is done with many other allowances allowed by companies, like medical bills, etc. where the staff don't genuinely use the allotted share, but they conjure medical bills, etc to claim extra from their companies.

All these actions are very low and distasteful to the Deen. In this regard we should understand a Shar`i principle, which many people are unaware of. Sometimes we see even religious people involving themselves in such sinful acts.

The principle is that the ownership of a thing and the permission to use a thing are two different factors. That thing which comes into one's ownership, can be used as one pleases. Whether one uses it on oneself or for the benefit of others, be it temporary or permanent, in all instances this is permissible. However, as for that thing which does not belong to you, but the owner has given consent for you to use it, you do not acquire ownership of it and it still remains the property of the owner. The requirement is that you use that thing to fulfil your needs to the extent the owner has intended or laid out. You do not have the consent to pass your right to use it onto someone else or that you invite someone else to also benefit therefrom. You also do not have this right that if you do not reap benefit from that thing, you can claim the value thereof.

A simple example of this is that assuming someone cooked some food and sent to our house. This food now becomes our property. Whether we eat the food, feed it to someone else or give it in Sadaqah, all this would be permissible. In fact, it would also be permissible for us to sell that food and take the money.

However, if someone invites us to his house to eat, then whatever food is present there is not our property. There is, nevertheless, consent from the owner (host) that we eat as much as we wish. We cannot regard this food as being our property, so we cannot invite someone else to also eat there (without the consent of the host).

As far as the remuneration a worker gets from his employer, be it cash or kind, he may use it as he pleases, because he becomes its owner. But insofar as any allowance for which the worker needs to present a bill to the employee, he cannot use that according to his own whims and fancy. Such allowances are only given to the worker when and if he had (properly) used the benefits offered by the company. If the worker did not use the benefits because he had no need for it or because it was more than what he used, then he cannot usurp more than what was due to him. This would be Haraam and sinful.

The example would be like the guest who could not present himself for the meal, so he sends a bill for the food to the host, stating that it is for the food which he could have eaten. Not even the lowest of low person would do such a thing! Without having used the benefits offered by the company, the worker presents the bill for compensation, is nothing more than a shameful act.

It is rather sad that many people nowadays do not regard this act as sinful, in act they deem it their right (to claim for what they did not use), even though this entails lies and deceit.

The underlying cause for all this is that people nowadays have made money and worldly belongings their objective in life. It is as though their Deeni progress, character and spiritual condition falls on the wayside, where no consideration is granted to it. It is as though all this has no value or that they are mere mirages. This condition is not expected to change overnight, but that does not mean that we remain the way we are and make no effort to make right the wrongs we are involved in. Good character and a Deeni environment are like perfume, which eventually reaches every nook.

ANSWERS (regarding The Sacred Places)

1. Hadhrat Jibraeel (alaihis salaam)
2. 10
3. Hadhrat Tameem Daari (radhiallahu anhu)
4. Sheemsi or Shamia
5. Toor-e-Sina, Toor-e-Zeena, Toor-e-Lebanon, Toor-e-Joodi and Toor-e-Hira
6. 475 square metres
7. Binboor
8. Aurangzeb Aalamgiri
9. Waleed bin Abdil Malik
10. Hadhrat Abbaas bin Abdil Mutallib
11. As`ad Hameeri
12. In the south-east
13. Waleed bin Abdil Malik
14. 80
15. Jamaalud Deen Asfahani
16. As`ad Hameeri
17. Baabus Salaam
18. Banu Khuzaa`a
19. Brownish colour
20. Hadhrat Abdullabin Zubair (radhiallahu anhu)

ANSWERS (regarding Fiqh)

1. Used Water, i.e. that water which was used to make wudhu in order to attain cleanliness. This water is clean, but it cannot be used again for wudhu
2. Ghusal of the deceased

3. The Maghrib Salaat for the Hujjaaj in Muzdalifah
4. Eid Salaat
5. For the Muhrim whilst in the state of Ihraam.

تمّت بالخير

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